Heartland Genealogy Blog Posts March-April 2025

Marcia Crawford Philbrick

https://heartlandgenealogy.org

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WWI War News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 1, 2025
Nemaha County,World War I,WWI
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/01/wwi-war-news-9/

Tuesday's Draft Examinations in Nemaha County: The Search for Able-Bodied Soldiers

As World War I raged on, the process of drafting soldiers became a reality for communities across the United States, including **Nemaha County, Kansas**. On **Tuesday, August 7, 1917**, the latest round of **physical examinations** took place, determining which men were fit for military service and which would be disqualified due to medical conditions. The **August 9, 1917**, issue of the *Courier Democrat* provided a detailed account of the examinations, the number of exemptions claimed, and the challenges of filling the county's **quota of 113 men**.

With **seventy men examined that day**, the results mirrored those of the previous day—many sought **exemptions** for various reasons, while others were **disqualified** due to physical disabilities. A handful of men, however, **declared their willingness to serve without hesitation**, demonstrating their commitment to the war effort. The newspaper also reflected on the **emotional toll** of the draft, noting that while the soldiers left to fight, the families they left behind bore their own burden of grief and uncertainty.

As the draft board continued its work, questions remained about whether enough men would **meet the requirements** or if further calls for enlistment would be necessary. These reports offer a fascinating glimpse into the **selection process for military service**, highlighting the **patriotism, concerns, and realities** of wartime recruitment in small-town America.

> **Tuesday night:** Seventy men were examined today. Just about the same as yesterday. The showing on the claims for exemption was a little better today, ten men signifying their willingness to serve their country without reserve. These ten were: **Lewis Monroe, Sabetha; Andrew Strahm, Bern; James Robertson,**

Baileyville; Wm. C. Conley, Seneca; Leo Stallbaumer, Kelly; Charles Dort, Pawnee; Edwin McDaniel, Corning; M. E. Crosswhite, Centralia; Joe Leuthold, Oneida; Aaron Levy, Seneca.

These four were discharged for physical disability: **Ray Walters, Baileyville; George Fritsch, Sabetha; Timothy Heiman, Jr., Seneca; Jos. W. Pfrang, Wetmore.**

Eliminating the four discharged, we have a little over **15 percent** who have **no claim for exemption.** Of the 140 men examined Monday and Tuesday, sixteen were discharged. Seventeen filed no claim. This is a little over **13 percent** making no claim in the two days.

Now take the first call—**226 men** and examine it closely. First, we eliminate those who have already enlisted and who do not count on Nemaha County's **quota of 113 men.** There are **14** of these. We have left **212 men.** Now drop the men who will…

be discharged, sixteen for Monday and Tuesday—probably 24 men, physically unfit. You have left from your original call 188 men. Now take the 188 and deduct fifty percent for married men and single men who have ground for exemption. You have left 94 men. Now deduct at least another ten percent for those who will fail to pass the next army examination. You have left 84 men out of the necessary 113. If it takes 226 names on the registration list to furnish 84 men it will take 303 names to furnish 113 men. Now we don't claim the above figures to be accurate. We were just figuring it out for the fun of it. Your guess is as good as ours. It may be that the exemptions will run higher than fifty percent out of the 85 percent that will be claimed. It may be that the army physicians will reject more than ten percent. If the local board wants to play safe, however, it will issue a call for at least one hundred more men.

This matter of claiming an exemption and getting away with it will not be a soft snap. The two district boards met in the Governor's office Monday and formed the rules to govern in the cases taken to that board. For instance, this board has the say-so on all claims filed by farmers for agricultural exemptions. The farmer must be able to show by affidavits and otherwise that he is absolutely indispensable to that farm, and that his leaving would cause substantial loss. It is thought that at least **25 percent** of the claims filed at Seneca Monday and Tuesday were for industrial exemption.

County Attorney **H. M. Baldwin** was present Tuesday at the examinations. Mr. Baldwin represents the government as a **special investigator**. He told a reporter Tuesday that he would personally examine all claims for exemption.

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 2, 2025
SaturdayNightGenealogyFun
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/02/saturday-night-genealogy-fun-146/

Calling all Genea-Musings Fans:

It's Saturday Night again –

Time for some more Genealogy Fun!!

Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision.

1) 'Twas the week before RootsTech 2025, and all through the house, the genealogists were checking their RootsTech schedule. What classes are you looking forward to watching online (for FREE) or attending in-person?

2) Tell us about your plans for RootsTech 2025 in your own blog post, in a comment on this post, or in a Facebook post. Please leave a link on this post if you write your own post

Randy commented about his having scheduled classes and then having them disappear. That also happened to me. I had classes scheduled but when I checked my schedule to write this blog post, none of them were scheduled.

So, now I have a spreadsheet of the various classes on my 'schedule'

Like Randy, my schedule is full of AI classes. However, when I compared my list to his, I found a class on his list that is not on my list. Nor is it on my list of potential online classes for that day.

Discover Your DNA Story with DaNA: Your AI Guide

Since Randy alerted me to the class (which does show up if you search for it by name), I now have it on my schedule.

Besides AI, I am always interested in the ‘what’s news’ type of sessions and announcements. Thus, Crista Cowan’s What’s New at Ancestry in 2025 session is on my list. I also have several FamilySearch sessions, a couple of DNA classes and the General Sessions scheduled.

While I’m betting that I don’t get all of the sessions I have highlighted to watch actually watched, it will be a great week for genealogy education!

Am I Wrong?

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 3, 2025
Crandall,RootsTech
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/03/am-i-wrong/

Investigating a Possible Crandall Connection at RootsTech 2025

If you're attending **RootsTech 2025**, you're likely familiar with the popular activity **Relatives at RootsTech**. As of this post, I have over **32,000 relatives** identified through this tool! Each year, I enjoy scanning the list for close cousins or connections that might help extend my family research.

Could we be related?
Looks like I'm already related to 32,261 RootsTech Attendees. Let's see if we are cousins!
www.familysearch.org/connect

While browsing the **connections by ancestor**, one name stood out—**Almira Nafus**, my **3rd great-grandmother**. Since Almira passed away before her husband, **Lewis Crandall**, remarried in 1846, I have very little information on her or Lewis, who died in 1852. This made me curious to see what other researchers might have uncovered about her.

A Curious Connection: Frederick Crandall

The first match I explored was a descendant of **Frederick Crandall and Mary Mockerman**. While I had Frederick in my records, I had identified him as the son of **Carey Billings Crandall and Sally Shaw**. The only documentation I have on Frederick is an **1850 census** listing an **11-year-old Frederick** in the household of **Anna Crandall** in **Van Buren County, Iowa**—alongside Jane, Salomer, John, Eliza, Eliz, and Lewis Crandall. This same record is linked to **Lewis Crandall's widow, Anna**, and his other known children: Jane, Salome, John, Eliza, Elsie, and Lewis.

This raised an important research question: **Was the Frederick Crandall who married Mary Mockerman in Eaton County, Michigan, in 1880 actually the son of Lewis Crandall?**

Investigating the DNA and Migration Patterns

Since *Mockerman* is a unique surname in my research, I decided to check my **DNA matches** for anyone with the Mockerman name in their tree—possibly indicating a relationship between Lewis Crandall and this Frederick. The search came up **negative**.

Even though the **Crandall family** was in **Van Buren County, Iowa, in 1850**, it wouldn't be unusual for a child to later appear in **Eaton County, Michigan**. My **2nd great-grandmother, Salome Crandall**, married **Thurston Wells** in Van Buren County, Iowa, and they later moved to Eaton County, Michigan, where Thurston's mother and siblings lived. However, I found no **record confirming that a Frederick Crandall from Van Buren County, Iowa, moved to Michigan**.

Probate Records: A Key Discovery

To clarify Frederick's parentage, I reviewed **probate records** for **Lewis Crandall**—and made a key discovery.

A son named **Frederick is NOT mentioned** in these records. Since the **1850 census lists Frederick as an 11-year-old**, he should have been recorded as a **minor child in probate records from 1856**. Instead, the probate records name a

child called **Freelove Crandall**. Interestingly, the **guardian records list the children in the same order as the 1850 census**—but with **Freelove instead of Frederick**.

Additionally, an **1862 deed** records that **Thomas C. Dodson** purchased the **undivided interests** of Lewis Crandall's minor heirs:

- **John N. Crandall**
- **Eliza Ann Crandall**
- **Elsey Crandall**
- **Lewis Crandall, Jr.**

In a separate deed, **Freelove Crandall sold her undivided seventh share** to Thomas C. Dodson.

Final Conclusion and Next Steps

Based on **probate records and land deeds**, I do **not** believe **Lewis Crandall had a son named Frederick**. This suggests that I was correct in **not linking Frederick Crandall, husband of Mary Mockerman, as a son of Lewis Crandall**.

However, further research is still needed to **fully confirm or disprove this hypothesis**. Additional sources, such as court records or local histories, may help provide further clarity on Frederick's true parentage.

RootsTech always provides an exciting opportunity to **challenge assumptions, explore new connections, and refine family history research**—and this case is a perfect example of that!

SOURCES:

1846 Marriage Record: Iowa, County Marriages, 1838-1934," FamilySearch (www.familysearch.org : Van Buren County, Iowa, viewed online (12 November 2023), Lewis Crandall / Anna Tuttle.Iowa, County Marriages, 1838-1934," FamilySearch (www.familysearch.org : Van Buren County, Iowa, viewed online (12 November 2023), Lewis Crandall / Anna Tuttle.

1850 Census: 1850 U.S. Census, Van Buren County, Iowa, population schedule, Washington Township, Van Buren County, Iowa, page 263 (stamped), Image 14 of 26, family 95, Anna Crandall; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 3 October 2022); NARA microfilm publication M432

1855 Sale of land by Freelove Crandall to Thomas Dodson: Iowa, Van Buren. Deed Records, lands and lots, 1837-1903. Film #967297 DGS 8584530. Freelove Crandall, April 1855; Book 3: page 207; Digitized images, FamilySearch http://www.familysearch.org : viewed online April 2022.

1856 Court Guardian Record: Iowa, Van Buren. Probate Record, Vol. E-F, 1854-1860. Film #967595 DGS 7591599. Lewis Crandall, 8 Apr 1856; Vol. E: page 451; Digitized images, FamilySearch http://www.familysearch.org : viewed online April 2022.

1858 Sale of Land by Minor Children to Thomas Dodson: Iowa, Van Buren. Probate Record, Vol. E-F, 1854-1860. Film #967595 DGS 7591599. Lewis Crandall, 1 Apr 1858; Vol F: page 260; Digitized images, FamilySearch http://www.familysearch.org : viewed online April 2022.

WW2 News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 4, 2025
Nemaha County,World War II,WWII
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/04/ww2-news-2/

WORLD WAR II NEWS
STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES
RLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR I NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS

Captain Vincent Rethman's Rise in Military Service

As the United States prepared for its growing role in **World War II**, many young men from **Nemaha County, Kansas**, answered the call to serve. Among them was **Vincent C. Rethman**, whose dedication and training led to his recent promotion to **Captain** at **Georgia Aero-Tech**, as reported in the **August 4, 1941** issue of the *Courier Tribune*.

Captain Rethman's journey to leadership began with military training during his education, particularly in **chemical warfare**. After graduating from **Kansas University**, he worked as a **chemical engineer** in **New York City** before enlisting in the **U.S. Air Corps**. His training took him to **Lakeland, Florida**, and later to **Augusta, Georgia**, where he logged **45 hours of flight time**, mastering **night, instrument, and cross-country flying**.

Meanwhile, another **Seneca native, Wilfrid Kramer**, was assigned to the **Signal Corps at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey**, after being accepted at **Ft. Leavenworth**. With a strong interest in **radio work**, he hoped to continue specialized training in that field.

As these local men advanced in their military careers, their stories reflected the growing contributions of small-town America to the **wartime effort**, offering a glimpse into the **dedication, sacrifice, and ambition** of those who served.

> **Vincent Rethman Advanced to Rank of Captain**
>
> **Augusta, Georgia** – The appointment of cadet officers at **Georgia Aero-Tech** was announced Monday.

Cadet F. W. Monford has been named **battalion major**, with **Captain V. C. Rethman** as adjutant.

Wilfrid Kramer, a **Seneca boy** who was recently accepted at **Ft. Leavenworth**, has been assigned to the **Signal Corps at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey**, and was to leave for the East last week. **Wilfrid has been interested in radio work** and hopes for continued training in that field.

Captain Rethman took military training while attending school, at that time particularly studying **chemical warfare**. After graduating from **Kansas University**, he began work as a **chemical engineer for the National Starch Co. in New York City**. He left employment last March to **join the U.S. Air Corps**. He took part of his training at **Lakeland, Florida**.

He has had **45 hours of flight time** in the air at Augusta, including **night, instrument, and cross-country flying**. He will complete his course at the Georgia school in **two weeks** and will be transferred to an **advanced flying school**. The transfer may allow time for a **visit with his sisters and mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Rethman**.

Where Am I From

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 5, 2025
FamilySearch
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/05/familysearch-where-am-i-from/

Discover Your Ancestral Roots with FamilySearch

Have you ever wondered where your ancestors were born? In 2016, J. Paul Hawthorne sparked a viral phenomenon with *My Colorful Ancestry*, a pedigree worksheet color-coded by birth location. (see my worksheet)

Similar to this idea, FamilySearch introduced the *Where Am I From?* activity in 2020, offering an interactive way to map your ancestors' birthplaces. To use this tool, you need just two things: a free FamilySearch account and at least four generations entered into a family tree. (Additional information) Then, the journey begins!

Explore Your Heritage

Generations – Visualize your ancestors' birth locations, one generation at a time.

FamilySearch
Family Tree
Search
Memories
Get Involved
Activities
Where Am I From?
Generations
My Family Lines
Minneapolis
Chicago
Denver
United States
Kansas City
St. Louis
Nashville
2
2
2
7
OF GENERATIONS
All
1
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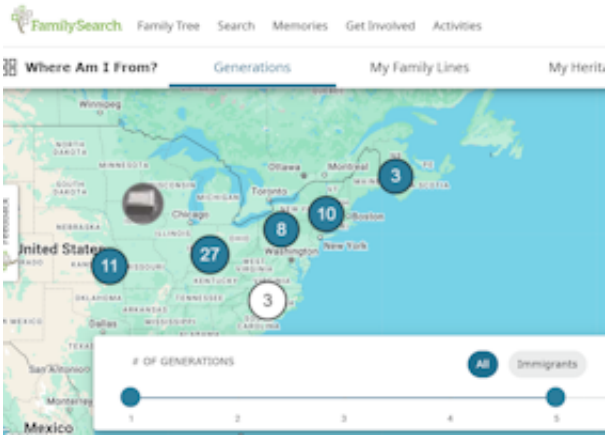
FamilySearch
Family Tree
Search
Memories
Get Involved
Activities
Where Am I From?
Generations
My Family Lines
Winnipeg
Ottawa
Montreal
Toronto
Chicago
Boston
New York
Washington
Dallas
Mexico
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OF GENERATIONS
All
Immigrants
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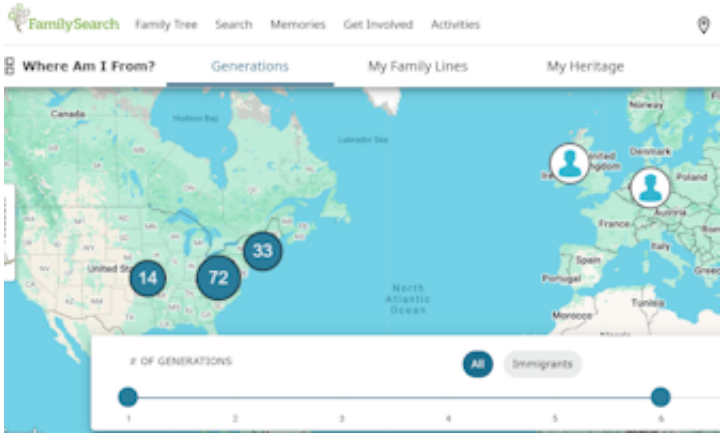
FamilySearch
Family Tree
Search
Memories
Get Involved
Activities
Where Am I From?
Generations
My Family Lines
My Heritage
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Norway
Denmark
Poland
France
Italy
Spain
Portugal
Morocco
Tunisia
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OF GENERATIONS
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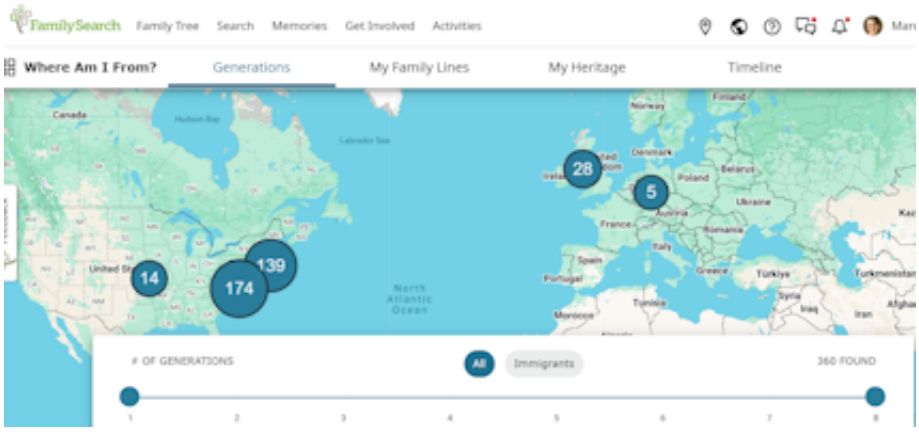
FamilySearch
Family Tree
Search
Memories
Get Involved
Activities
Where Am I From?
Generations
My Family Lines
My Heritage
Timeline
Canada
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Finland
Denmark
Poland
Belarus
Ukraine
France
Romania
Italy
Spain
Portugal
Greece
Türkiye
Morocco
Tunisia
North Atlantic Ocean
28
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OF GENERATIONS
All
Immigrants
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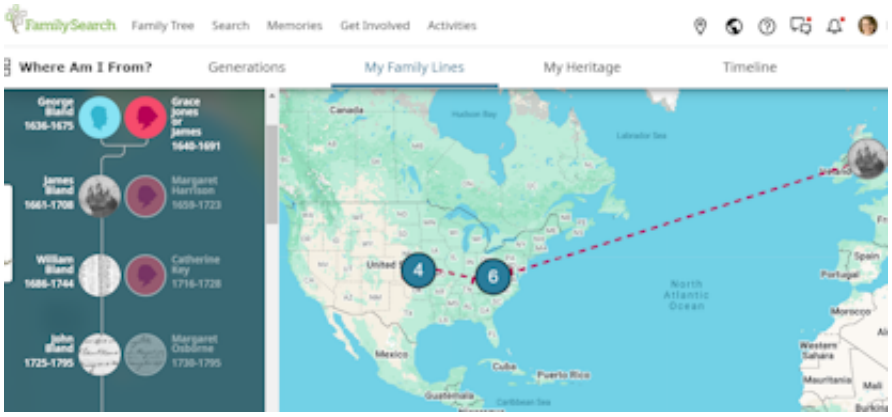
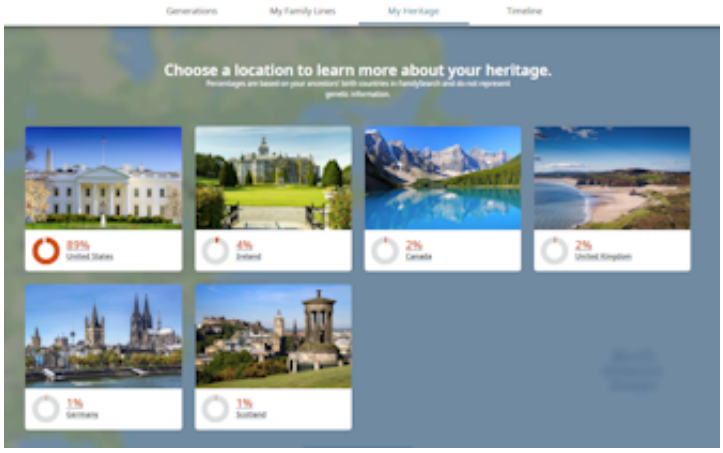
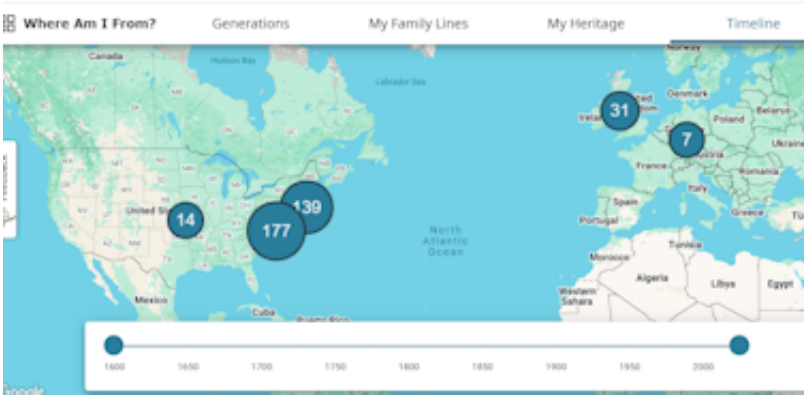
- **My Family Lines** – Trace a branch of your family back through time to see their places of birth. (*Note: Mapping is based on data in the FamilySearch tree.*)

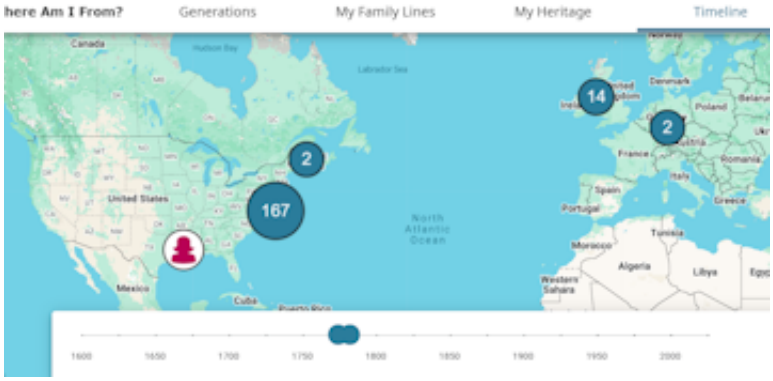


- **My Heritage** – Break down your ancestry by region, revealing your family's geographic origins. No surprise—I discovered I'm 89% United States!



- **Timeline** – See how your ancestors' birthplaces change over time and filter by historical events like the U.S. Revolutionary War.



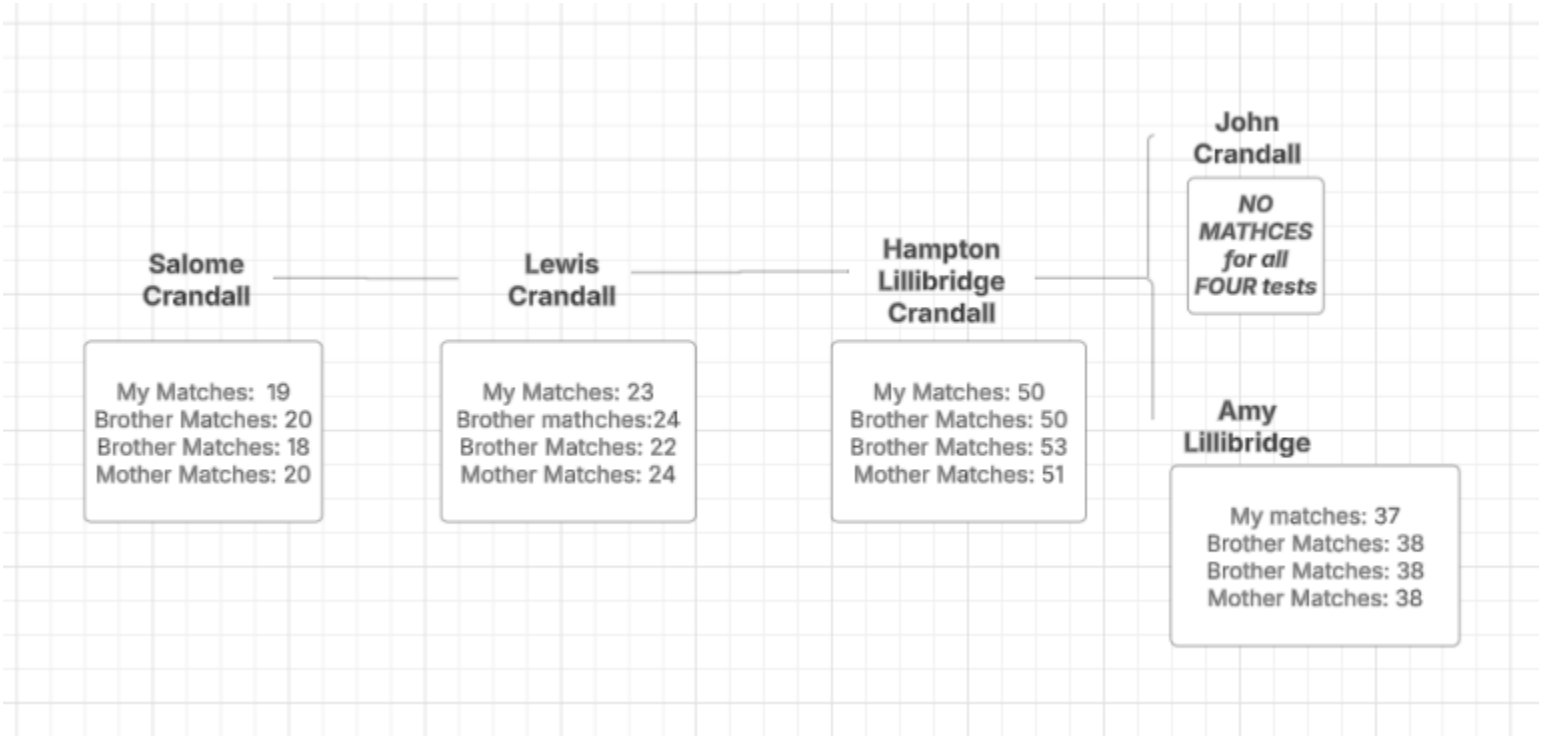


This free FamilySearch activity offers a fascinating glimpse into your heritage, helping you visualize and connect with your family's past like never before.

DNA Mystery

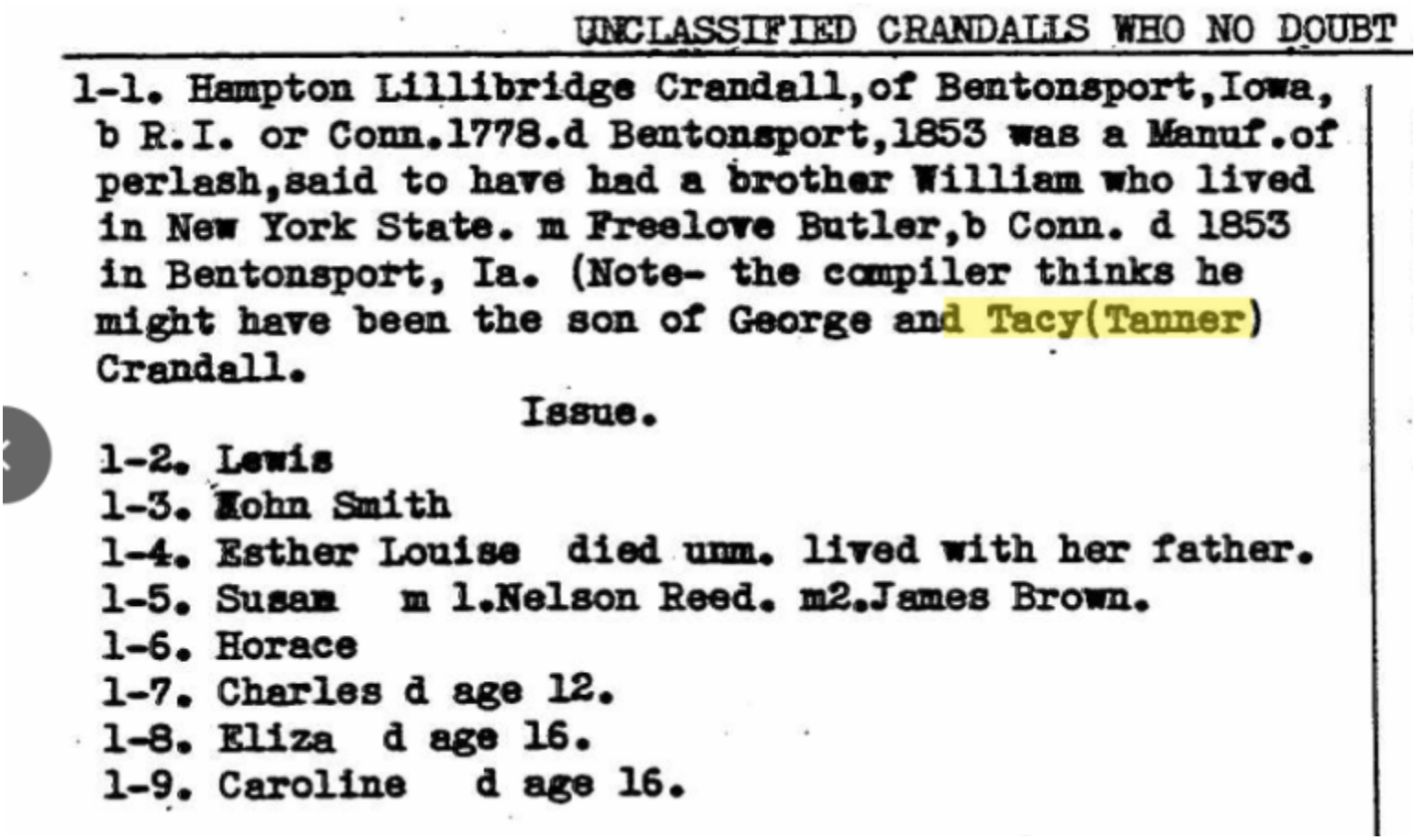
By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 6, 2025
Crandall
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/06/dna-mystery/

Do any of your ancestors show zero matches on Thrulines? And if so, does their spouse have several matches? After reviewing the children in the family of Lewis Crandall and Almira Nafus, I examined my own Crandall Thrulines. I discovered that John Crandall—my 5th great-grandfather on the Crandall line—has zero matches across my test, my brother's tests, and my mother's DNA test. In contrast, Amy Lillibridge, who I have recorded as John Crandall's wife, shows 37 or more matches.



A review of the FamilySearch tree confirms that John and Amy (Lillibridge) Crandall are listed as the parents of Hampton Lillibridge Crandall. A review on the Ancestry trees for DNA tests with Hampton L. Crandall in the tree although one version of the tree cites F. George Crandall and William Nelson Crandall as the father.

The sourcing for this parent-child relationship is sparse. However, one known source—the book *Elder John Crandall of Rhode Island and His Descendants*—supports George Crandall and Tacy Tanner as the parents.



UNCLASSIFIED CRANDALLS WHO NO DOUBT

1-1. Hampton Lillibridge Crandall,of Bentonsport,Iowa, b R.I. or Conn.1778.d Bentonsport,1853 was a Manuf.of perlash,said to have had a brother William who lived in New York State. m Freelove Butler,b Conn. d 1853 in Bentonsport, Ia. (Note- the compiler thinks he might have been the son of George and Tacy(Tanner) Crandall.

Issue.

1-2. Lewis
1-3. John Smith
1-4. Esther Louise died unm. lived with her father.
1-5. Susan m 1.Nelson Reed. m2.James Brown.
1-6. Horace
1-7. Charles d age 12.
1-8. Eliza d age 16.
1-9. Caroline d age 16.

This raises the question: What are the next steps to determine the parents of Hampton L. Crandall?

- **Remove the parents from Lewis Crandall in my Ancestry tree** and await suggestions from the Ancestry algorithm.
- **Research the descendants of Hampton L. Crandall.**
- **Color-code my Crandall-Nafus DNA matches** to identify potential Crandall cousins.
- **Use FamilySearch's Full Text Lab** to locate potential deeds and probate records.
- **Search for digital copies of Crandall Family Association newsletters.**
- **Add George Crandall and Tacy Tanner as the parents of Hampton L. Crandall on the FamilySearch tree** and review what Relatives at RootsTech reveals.

Quality Score

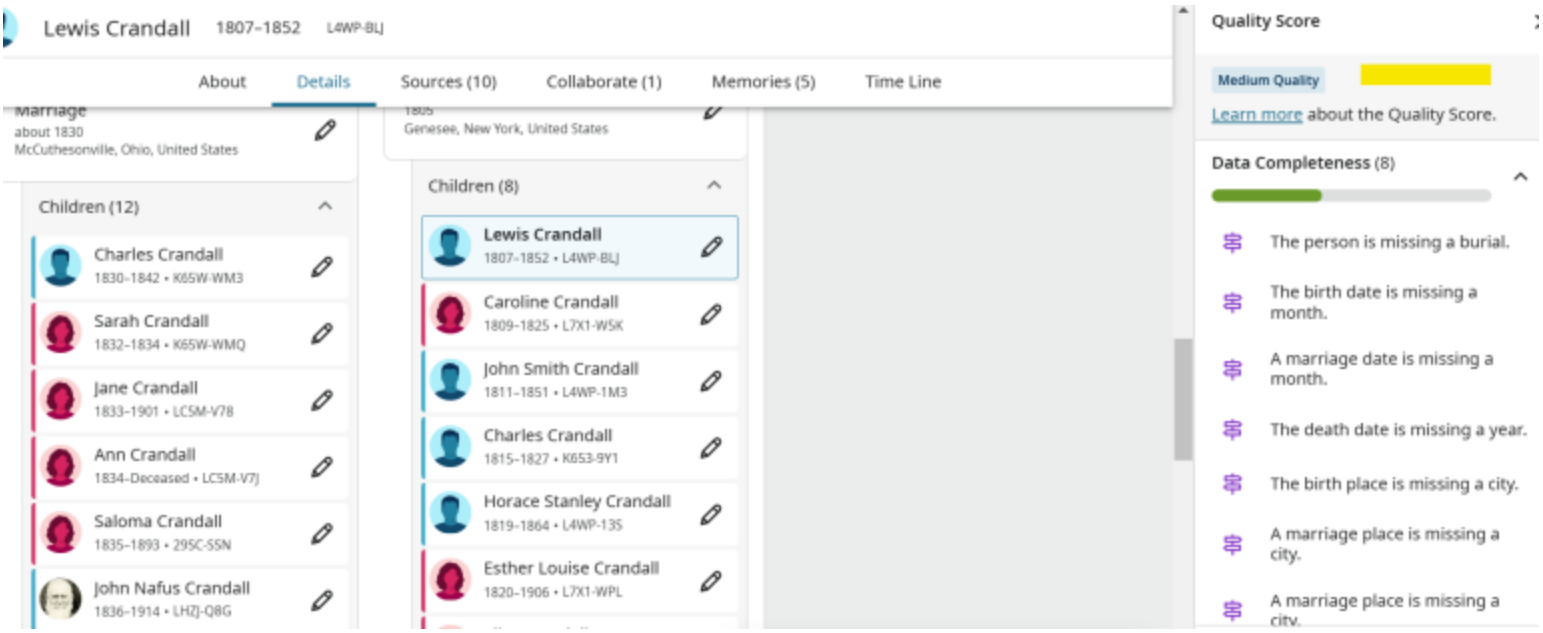
By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 6, 2025
RootsTech
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/06/quality-score/

Did you catch the RootsTech 2025 session, *FamilySearch Global and Tech Forum*? If so, you may have heard about the new *Quality Score* feature.

This tool evaluates an individual's profile on the FamilySearch tree based on four key criteria:

- **Data Completeness**
- **Source Tagging**
- **Source Consistency**
- **Conflict-Free Data**

Curious about how it worked, I checked a few of my ancestors in the tree. My 4th great-grandfather, **James Crawford**, had a *high* quality score, while my 3rd great-grandfather, **Lewis Crandall**, received a *medium* score—mainly due to incomplete data. This wasn't surprising, as his birth, marriage, death, and burial details remain vague.



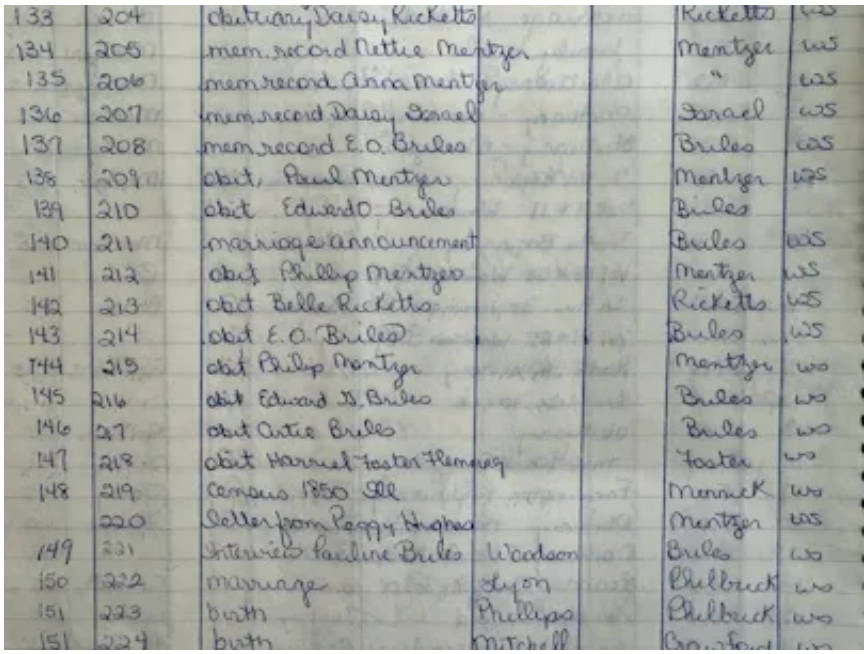
A big thank you to FamilySearch for introducing this helpful tool! It's a great way to identify areas for improvement in our family trees.

Friday Find

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 7, 2025
Mentzer
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/07/friday-find-73/

Do you have obituary clippings in your files? I'm fortunate to have several, but unfortunately, I often lack enough details to create a proper source citation.

Today's ***Friday Find*** is a perfect example. Unlike most clippings in my collection, which came from either of my grandmothers, this one is a photocopy I obtained in the early days of my research. Back then, I kept a running log of my discoveries and assigned them numbers. However, that log does not include the name or date of the newspaper for this particular clipping.

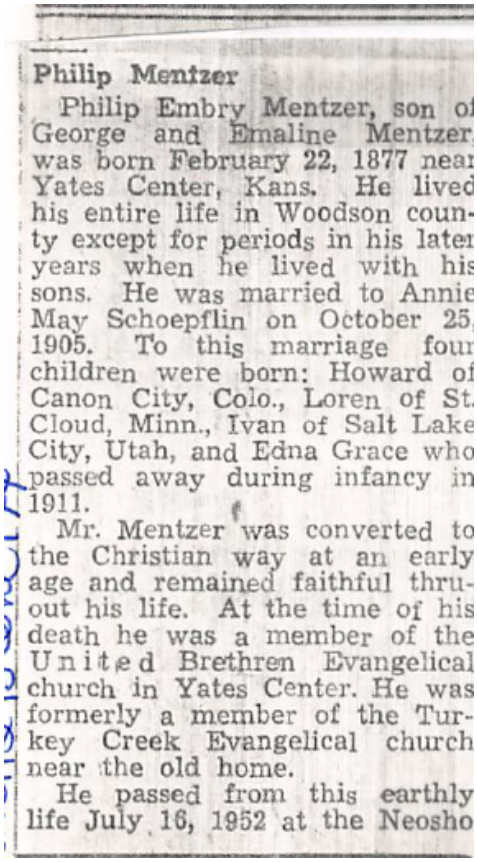


133	204	obituary Daisy Ricketts			Ricketts	WS
134	205	mem. record Nettie Mentzer			Mentzer	WS
135	206	mem record Anna Mentzer			"	WS
136	207	mem record Daisy Israel			Israel	WS
137	208	mem record E.O. Briles			Briles	WS
138	209	obit, Paul Mentzer			Mentzer	WS
139	210	obit Edward O Briles			Briles	
140	211	marriage announcement			Briles	WS
141	212	obit Phillip Mentzer			Mentzer	WS
142	213	obit Belle Ricketts			Ricketts	WS
143	214	obit E.O. Briles			Briles	WS
144	215	obit Philip Mentzer			Mentzer	WS
145	216	obit Edward N. Briles			Briles	WS
146	217	obit Artie Briles			Briles	WS
147	218	obit Harriet Foster Flemings			Foster	WS
148	219	Census 1850 Ill			Mennick	WS
	220	letter from Peggy Hughes			Mentzer	WS
149	221	Interview Pauline Briles	Woodson		Briles	WS
150	222	marriage	Lyon		Philbrick	WS
151	223	birth	Phillips		Philbrick	WS
151	224	birth	Mitchell		Crawford	WS

At the top of my obituary clipping for Philip Mentzer, it states that it came from the “Enter News, Yates Centr, Kansas.” Based on this, I’m concluding that it was published in the *Yates Center News* of Yates Center, Kansas. I most likely accessed it via microfilm at the Kansas State Historical Society. Unfortunately, this is one of the Kansas newspapers whose 1950s issues have not yet been digitized.

Below is a transcription of the obituary, as generated by ChatGPT.

Philip Mentzer



Philip Mentzer

Philip Embry Mentzer, son of George and Emaline Mentzer, was born February 22, 1877 near Yates Center, Kans. He lived his entire life in Woodson county except for periods in his later years when he lived with his sons. He was married to Annie May Schoepflin on October 25, 1905. To this marriage four children were born: Howard of Canon City, Colo., Loren of St. Cloud, Minn., Ivan of Salt Lake City, Utah, and Edna Grace who passed away during infancy in 1911.

Mr. Mentzer was converted to the Christian way at an early age and remained faithful thruout his life. At the time of his death he was a member of the United Brethren Evangelical church in Yates Center. He was formerly a member of the Turkey Creek Evangelical church near the old home.

He passed from this earthly life July 16, 1952 at the Neosho

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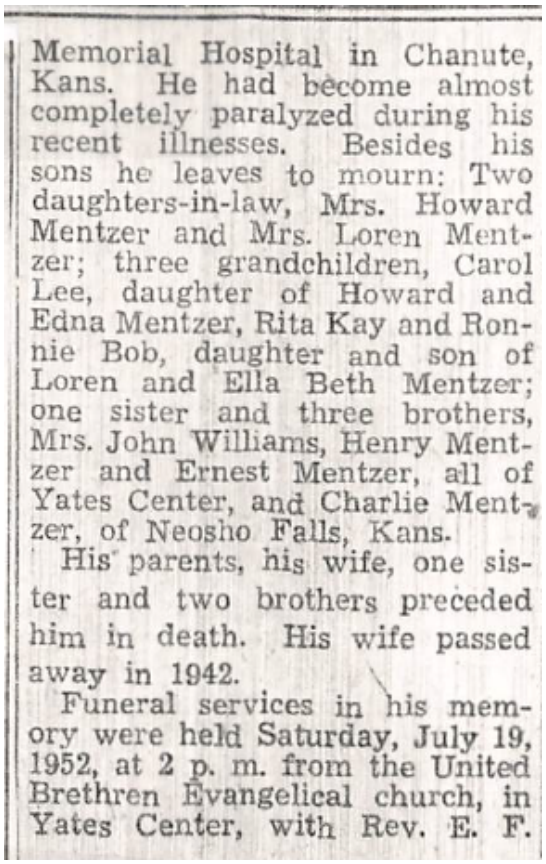
column 2



Memorial Hospital in Chanute, Kans. He had become almost completely paralyzed during his recent illnesses. Besides his sons he leaves to mourn: Two daughters-in-law, Mrs. Howard Mentzer and Mrs. Loren Mentzer; three grandchildren, Carol Lee, daughter of Howard and Edna Mentzer, Rita Kay and Ronnie Bob, daughter and son of Loren and Ella Beth Mentzer; one sister and three brothers, Mrs. John Williams, Henry Mentzer and Ernest Mentzer, all of Yates Center, and Charlie Mentzer, of Neosho Falls, Kans.

His parents, his wife, one sister and two brothers preceded him in death. His wife passed away in 1942.

Funeral services in his memory were held Saturday, July 19, 1952, at 2 p. m. from the United Brethren Evangelical church, in Yates Center, with Rev. E. F.

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Column 3

Boehringer officiating, assisted by Rev. H. T. Wright. A mixed quartet from the Turkey Creek Evangelical church, composed of Charles Mulsow, Hilda Light, Lorraine Beine and Richard Mulsow, with Mrs. Earl Louderbaugh, accompanist, sang "When They Ring Those Golden Bells", "Beautiful Garden of Eden" and "Safe in the Arms of Jesus". Casketbearers were: Harley Mentzer, Norryce Mentzer, Burdette Mentzer, Leslie Mentzer, Wesley Williams, Roy Schoepflin.

Burial was in Yates Center cemetery.

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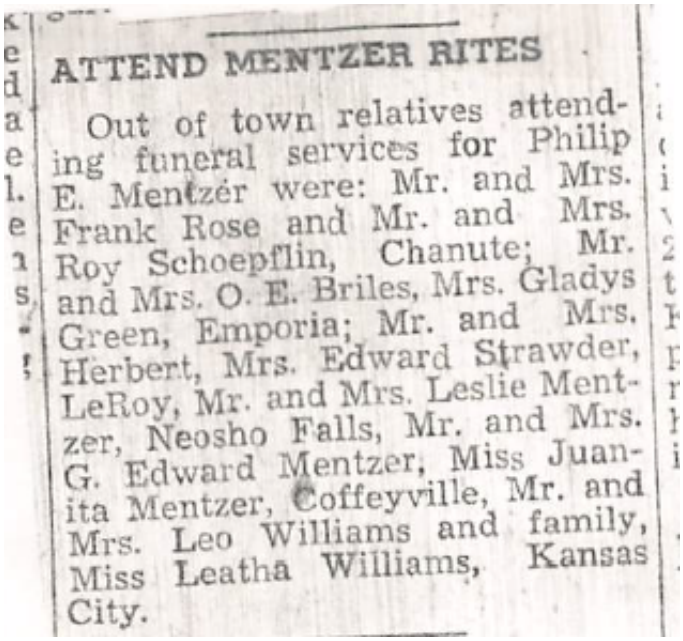
Burial was in Yates Center cemetery.

Along with the obituary, I copied an article identifying those ‘out of town’ relatives who attended the funeral.

ATTEND MENTZER RITES

Out of town relatives attending funeral services for Philip E. Mentzer were: Mr. and Mrs. Frank Rose and Mr. and Mrs. Roy Schoepflin, Chanute; Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Briles, Mrs. Gladys Green, Emporia; Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, Mrs. Edward Strawder, LeRoy; Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Mentzer, Neosho Falls, Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Mentzer, Miss Juanita Mentzer, Coffeyville, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Williams and family, Miss Leatha Williams, Kansas City.



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Conclusion

This obituary for Philip Mentzer is a valuable piece of family history, but its incomplete citation serves as a reminder of how crucial it is to record source details at the time of discovery. While I can reasonably deduce that it came from the *Yates Center News*, the lack of a definitive publication date leaves a gap in my documentation.

This experience underscores the challenges of historical research—especially when relying on materials gathered early in the journey. It also highlights the importance of digitizing and preserving local newspapers, which remain an invaluable resource for genealogists.

Despite these limitations, the obituary itself provides meaningful insight into Philip Mentzer's life, faith, and family connections. I'm grateful to have it in my collection, and sharing it here ensures that his story is not forgotten.

If you have obituary clippings in your files, take a moment to revisit them. Do they have full citations? If not, now is a great time to fill in any missing details. And if you've come across *Yates Center News* archives from the early 1950s, I'd love to hear from you!

This post was written with assistance from ChatGPT, an AI tool that helps refine and organize my research findings.

World War I War News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 8, 2025
World War I,WWI
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/08/world-war-i-war-news-2/

As reported in the 9 Aug 1917 issue of the Courier Democrat, the Nemaha County Draft Board continued examining potential draftees on Wednesday, providing the press with information on 47 individuals.

> **Wednesday noon:** Well, here are the figures on the forty-seven names that we were able to get of those who were examined on Wednesday morning, before going to press. Out of the 47 Wednesday, ten did not claim exemptions. This is the best record made for any one day, and is very nearly 20 percent. Those who made no claims Wednesday morning were:
>
> Marion Riley, Goff; Goff Wilson, Sabetha; Albert V. Huerter, Seneca; James P. Alexander, Soldier; William E. Huerter, Seneca; Chas. A. Tate, Seneca; John G. Meyer, Sabetha; Emil Hecht, Seneca.
>
> Five were discharged for physical disability: Harley Torrence of Baileyville, Chester Garvin of Goff, John W. O'Neal of Goff, Benj. F. Parnell of Seneca, and Henry A. Stegeman of Onaga.

Enlisted Men

837, James Corlett, Centralia
945, Frank I. Walters, Bancroft
548, Harry C. Whitney, Corning
126, Cedric Routh, Seneca

507, Orville Tomlinson, Corning
652, Michael Lehner, Goff
117, Frank E. Winkler, Seneca
194, Earl Henderson, Seneca
1288, Claude Anderson, Oneida
218, Harry Hanson, Sabetha
550, John Whitney, Corning
54, Lester Griffith, Baileyville
335, Wayne Malesworth, Goff
957, Robert DeForrest, Wetmore

Discharged Physical Disability

458, Everton A. Bell, Goff
676, Lester M. Hyde, Goff
1485, Her. Weisedippe, Seneca
486, David A. Cody, Goff
309, Glenn McDonald, Sabetha
604, Edwin P. Magill, Seneca
924, Willie Weisedeppe, Seneca
487, Geo. A. Andler, Wetmore
797, Field Crosswhite, Havensville
1419, Ray Walters, Baileyville
983, Jos. W. Pfrang, Wetmore
343, George Fritch, Sabetha
1211, Tim Heiman, Jr., Seneca
1314, Benj. F. Cornell, Seneca
103, Henry Stegeman, Onaga
638, John W. O'Neal, Goff
1430, H. S. Torrence, Baileyville
1016, Chas. Garvin, Goff
B. F. Parnell
600, Henry C. Edwards, Seneca

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 9, 2025
RootsTech,SaturdayNightGenealogyFun
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/09/saturday-night-genealogy-fun-147/

Calling all Genea-Musings Fans:

It's Saturday Night again –

Time for some more Genealogy Fun!!

Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision.

1) 'Twas the week of RootsTech 2025, and all through the house, the genealogists were checking their RootsTech schedule. What classes did you absolutely love this week?

2) Tell us about your favorite RootsTech 2025 classes in your own blog post, in a comment on this post, or in a Facebook post. Please leave a link on this post if you write your own post.

Unfortunately, appointments and tasks interferred with my RootsTech participation. Fortunately, I was able to catch some of the sessions that were of particular interest.

As always, I enjoyed Crista Cowen's session about changes at Ancestry and have already created two networks in my online tree.

Another session that I happened to catch was the RootsTech Innovation Forum. As typicalof this session, I look forward to these innovations becoming part of my genealogy toolbox.

However, my favorite sessions was the group of AI sessions. I'm thankful for the way that they outlined developing prompts and for the guidance of the Guidelines for Responsible Use. While I missed the part where they gave Randy Seaver credit for the AI education he has provided, Randy deserves that recognition. Many of his AI related blog posts have prompted me to try similar tasks.

Even though I missed many of my scheduled sessions, I will be checking out the on-demand library of videos to watch the ones I missed.

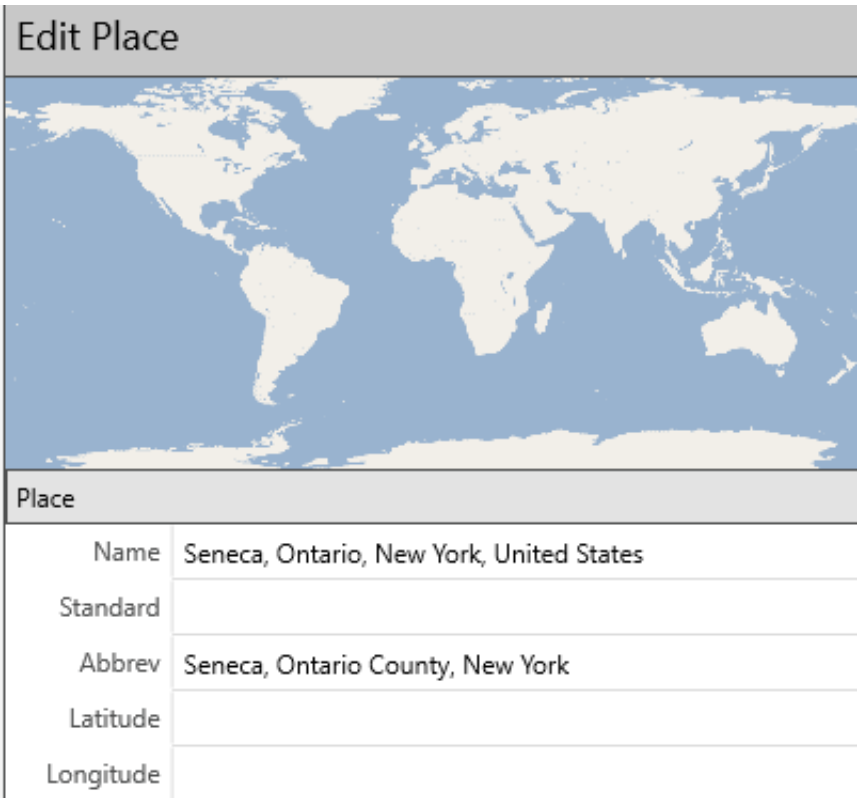
Thank you FamilySearch and everyone who made RootsTech possible!

RootsMagic GeoCode

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 10, 2025
RootsMagic,RootsMagic10
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/10/rootsmagic-geocode/

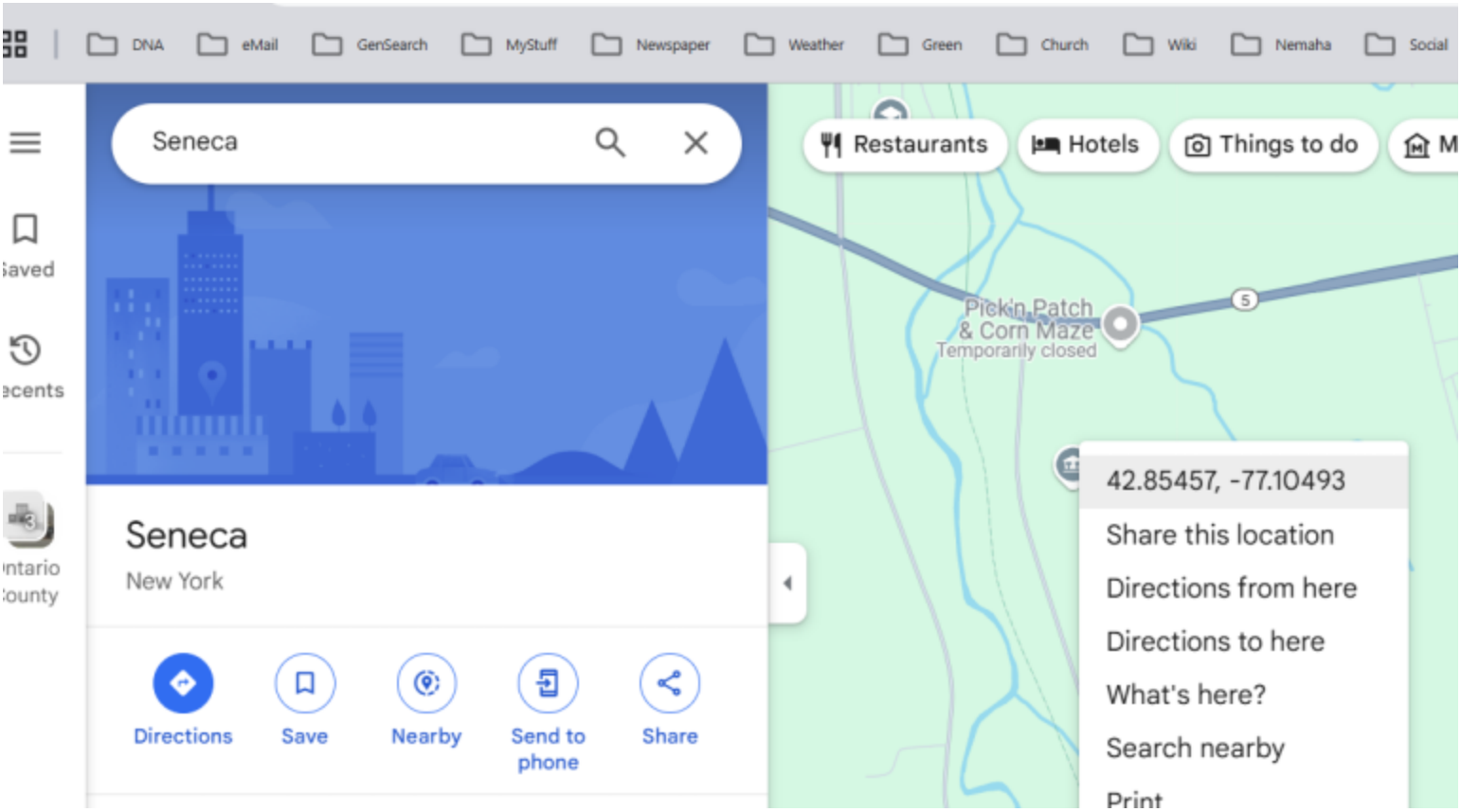
Have you ever considered the GeoCodes associated with places in RootsMagic? I hadn't paid much attention until I was adding abbreviations to some entries and decided to update the GeoCodes simultaneously.

That's when I discovered that the entry for Seneca, Ontario County, New York, United States was missing its GeoCode.

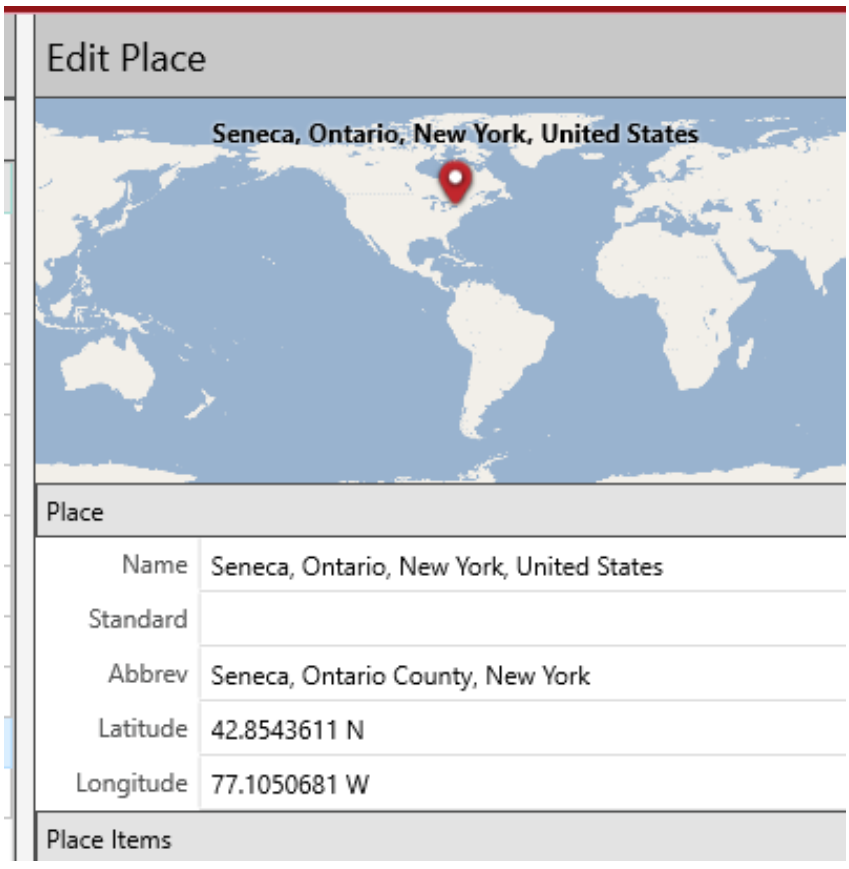


To resolve this, my first step was to verify the correct county for Seneca by searching on Google. Although I learned that New York has a Seneca County, I also found multiple sources—including a Wikipedia article—confirming that there is a town named Seneca in Ontario County. According to Wikipedia, Seneca in Ontario County is located at 42°50′13″N 77°4′32″W. However, entering these coordinates directly required me to adjust my Windows settings.

Fortunately, I came across a post *GeoCoding – Location Coordinates* on the RootsMagic forum that demonstrated a simpler process using Google Maps.



This allowed me to quickly copy and paste the correct GeoCode into RootsMagic.



WW2 News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 11, 2025
Nemaha County,World War II,WWII
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/11/ww2-news-3/

WORLD WAR II NEWS
STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES
RLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR I NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS

Honoring Local Service: Russell Buehler's Military Achievement

In the midst of World War II, the young men of Nemaha County were stepping forward to serve their country, and one of them, Russell Conwell Buehler, recently achieved a significant milestone. As reported in the *August 4, 1941*, issue of the *Courier Tribune*, Buehler, a Seneca native, received his commission as a **First Lieutenant** in the **Coast Artillery Corps**. His journey from Kansas to serving in the **Canal Zone, Panama**, reflects the commitment and dedication of local servicemen during this critical period in history. His achievements were officially recognized with a commission signed by **President Franklin D. Roosevelt**, a prestigious honor for the young officer and his family.

Read on to learn more about Lieutenant Buehler's service and the pride he brought to his hometown.

> **Russell Buehler Made A First Lieutenant**
>
> Russell Conwell Buehler, second son of **Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Buehler**, received his commission as **First Lieutenant** in the **Coast Artillery Corps** on **June 20th**.
>
> The commission was issued by **President Roosevelt** and signed by the **adjutant general**. The document was sent to **Mr. and Mrs. Buehler**.
>
> Lieutenant Buehler retains **Seneca** as his residence. He has been **Second Lieutenant on duty at Fort Amador, Canal Zone, Panama**, for several months.

Lt. Buehler is a graduate of **Seneca High School** and the **engineering department of Kansas State College, Manhattan**.

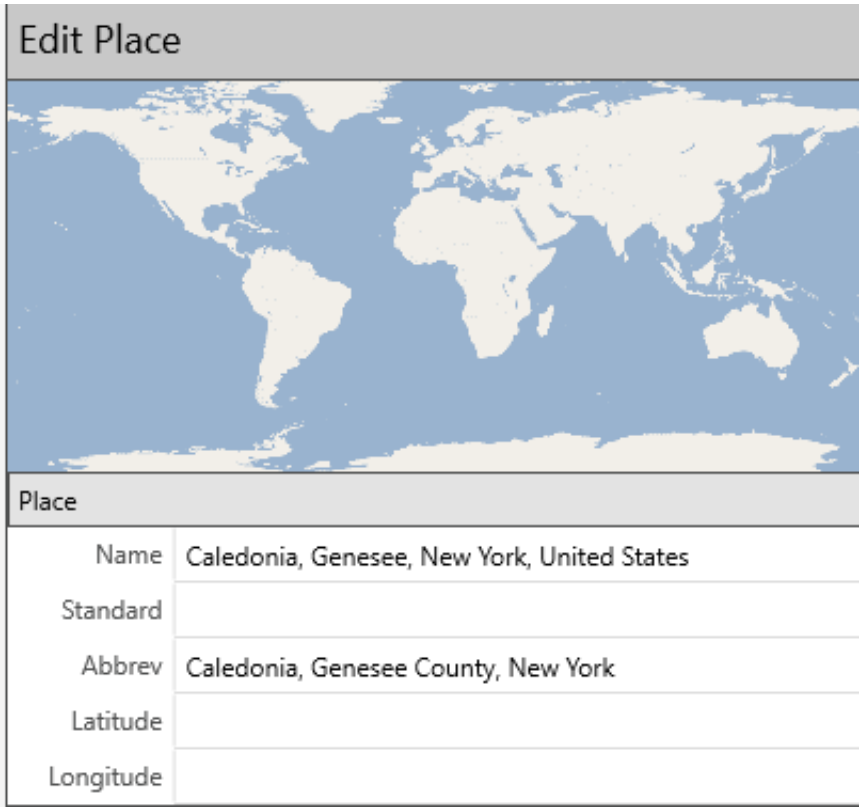
Historic Place Names

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 12, 2025
RootsMagic,RootsMagic10
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/12/historic-place-names/

Handling Place Name Changes Over Time: A Genealogical Challenge

How should you handle locations that have changed names or jurisdictions over time? Should you use the historic place name, and if so, how do you geocode it? One common example of this issue arises when identifying places in the U.S. before the American Revolution. Another frequent challenge is dealing with changes in county names.

While updating place names for a narrative report, I encountered this issue with Caledonia, Genesee County, New York. RootsMagic could not generate a geocode for this location.



A quick Google search for *Caledonia, New York* showed that it is now in Livingston County, not Genesee County. Fortunately, the **New York Genealogical and Biographical Society** provided a resource listing the towns and villages of Genesee County, which clarified the historical context. Between 1802 and 1821, Caledonia was part of Genesee County. However, with the formation of Livingston County in 1821, Caledonia was reassigned to the newly established county.

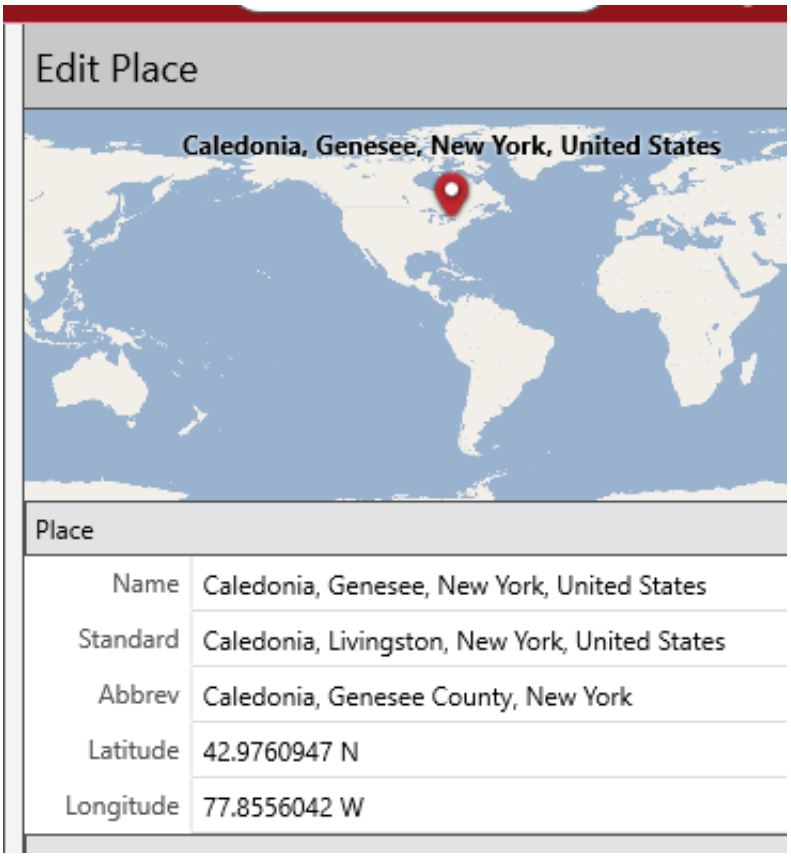
This presented a dilemma: For an event that took place prior to 1821, should I record *Caledonia in Genesee County* (as it was at the time) or *Caledonia in Livingston County* (as it is today)?

Fortunately, a discussion in the **Facebook RootsMagic Users group** offered a useful approach:

> **Enter the historical location name and abbreviation, but use the current name for standard location and geocoding.**

Following this advice, I recorded *Caledonia, Genesee County (historical)* and used Google Maps to obtain the latitude and longitude. I then manually entered this information into RootsMagic.

Unfortunately, RootsMagic did not automatically add the standardized name, so I had to input it manually. Despite this minor inconvenience, this approach ensures accuracy in both historical and modern contexts while allowing for proper geocoding.


Edit Place
Caledonia, Genesee, New York, United States
Place
Name
Caledonia, Genesee, New York, United States
Standard
Caledonia, Livingston, New York, United States
Abbrev
Caledonia, Genesee County, New York
Latitude
42.9760947 N
Longitude
77.8556042 W

AI and Occupations

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 13, 2025
Artificial Intelligence,Bland
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/13/ai-and-occupations/

Did you see **Randy Seaver's** *Saturday Night Genealogy Fun Challenge* on February 22, 2025? If so, did you use **Steve Little's** *Sam the Digital Archivist* custom prompt with the free ChatGPT-4 tool to investigate an ancestor's occupation?

For my response to the challenge, I used the prompt to explore the career of my great-grandfather, **Hiram M. Currey**, who was a *magnetic healer*. However, I also decided to dig deeper into the occupation of a cousin, **Charles Bland.**

In 1916, Charles Bland worked as a **police officer** in Kansas City. By 1925, he had transitioned to the **Union Pacific Railroad**, where he became a **division special agent** in 1931. Curious about his role, I used the *Sam the Digital Archivist* prompt to ask:

"Charles Bland was a division special agent for the Union Pacific Railroad in 1931. What did Charles Bland do for the railroad?"

ChatGPT responded with the following:

> A **Division Special Agent** for the **Union Pacific Railroad (UP)** in 1931 was essentially a high-ranking railroad detective. Charles Bland's job would have involved **investigating crimes, enforcing railroad policies, and ensuring the security of railroad property, personnel, and cargo**.
>
> ### Duties of a UP Division Special Agent in 1931:

1. **Investigating Crimes** – This included **theft of freight, vandalism, trespassing, and employee misconduct**. The railroad transported valuable goods, and theft (especially bootlegging during Prohibition) was a major issue.
2. **Preventing Sabotage & Labor Unrest** – The early 20th century was rife with **labor disputes**, and special agents often acted as security to prevent **strikes, sabotage, or violence**.
3. **Arresting Criminals** – Railroad special agents had **law enforcement powers** similar to police officers and could **make arrests**. Many were armed and worked closely with local law enforcement.
4. **Monitoring Train Robberies & Banditry** – Although train robberies had declined since the Wild West era, they still happened occasionally. A special agent would have been involved in **tracking down suspects and ensuring train security**.
5. **Checking Employees & Background Investigations** – Special agents monitored railroad employees for **internal theft, corruption, or other violations**.

The Union Pacific Special Agents: A Tough Crowd

By 1931, railroad detectives were **notorious for their no-nonsense approach**. The job was part law enforcement, part private security, and part corporate intelligence. Some agents had backgrounds in police work, while others had military or Pinkerton detective experience. **They worked long hours, often undercover, and weren't afraid to get their hands dirty.**

So, Charles Bland wasn't just keeping an eye on ticket jumpers—he was **chasing down criminals, busting bootleggers, protecting trains, and making sure the railroad's money kept rolling.**

Want to Dig Deeper?

1. Want help tracking down records on Charles Bland's UP career (maybe newspaper articles or personnel records)?
2. Curious about what major crimes happened on the Union Pacific in 1931?
3. Would you like to learn how to find railroad employment records from the 1930s?

Or do you have something else in mind? 🚂💨

Thanks to the *"Want to Dig Deeper"* prompt, I then asked the assistant:

"Can you help me find records of Charles Bland's Union Pacific career as a division special agent?"

ChatGPT responded with several steps I could take to uncover more details about his career with the **Union Pacific Railroad.**

Absolutely! Tracking down railroad employment records—especially for a **Union Pacific Railroad (UP) special agent in 1931**—involves checking multiple sources, including **archival collections, railroad historical societies, newspapers, and government records**. Here's how we can approach it:

Step 1: Check Union Pacific Employee Records

Union Pacific has historical employment records, but access depends on whether the records survived and are available to the public.

📌 **Where to Look:**

- **Union Pacific Railroad Museum & Archives**
  📍 UP Museum Research Requests
  They maintain some historical records, but personnel files are **not publicly available** unless previously donated or archived.
- **Union Pacific Railroad Historical Society (UPHS)**
  📍 UPHS Archives

UPHS has old employee records, photographs, and documents, but access may be limited.

📩 **Next Step:**
I recommend contacting both the museum and the historical society to **inquire about employment records for Charles Bland** (be sure to include his division if known).

Step 2: Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) Records

Since Charles Bland worked for the UP in 1931, his career may have extended into the **Railroad Retirement Board era (after 1937)**.

📌 **Where to Look:**

- **National Archives – Railroad Retirement Board Records**
  📍 Request RRB Records
  If he worked for the railroad after 1937, the RRB may have records of his employment, including positions held and retirement benefits.

📩 **Next Step:**
Submit **Standard Form 86** to request RRB records. There is a small fee, and you'll need proof of death if he passed away less than 72 years ago.

Step 3: Newspaper Archives (Detecting Cases & Mentions)

Since special agents were involved in law enforcement, **Charles Bland may have appeared in newspaper reports about crimes, arrests, or investigations**.

📌 **Where to Search:**

- **Chronicling America (Library of Congress) – Free**
  📍 Chronicling America
- **Newspapers.com (Subscription)**
  📍 Newspapers.com
- **GenealogyBank (Subscription)**
  📍 GenealogyBank

📩 **Next Step:**
I can help craft search terms like **"Charles Bland" + "Union Pacific" + "special agent" + 1931** to narrow results.

Step 4: Law Enforcement & Court Records

Since UP special agents had arrest powers, **court or law enforcement records might reference him**.

📌 **Where to Look:**

- **State Archives & Historical Societies** (For states where he worked)
- **National Archives (NARA)** (Federal court records)
  📍 NARA Court Records
- **Local Police & Sheriff's Departments** (If he worked closely with them)

📩 **Next Step:**
Identifying the **state and city of his division** would help pinpoint court records.

Step 5: Census & City Directories

If Charles Bland lived in a railroad town, **city directories or censuses might list his occupation**.

📌 **Where to Search:**

- **1930 & 1940 U.S. Census** (via Ancestry, FamilySearch, or NARA)
- **City Directories (Ancestry, Fold3, local libraries)**

📩 **Next Step:**
Search for **"Charles Bland"** in city directories from major UP locations to confirm his residence and employment.

What Next?

1️⃣ Want me to dig into newspaper archives and see if he made headlines?
2️⃣ Need help submitting a Railroad Retirement Board request?
3️⃣ Want to track him down in census records and city directories?

Or do you have another angle in mind? 🚂🔍

Using the *Sam the Digital Archivist* prompt provided valuable insights into Charles Bland's career as a **division special agent** for the **Union Pacific Railroad.** Not only did it help clarify his role, but it also guided me toward resources for further research.

While AI tools like ChatGPT can offer a great starting point, uncovering a more complete picture requires diving into historical records, archives, and railroad employment documents. Exploring **railroad archives, historical newspapers, genealogical databases, and government records** could reveal even more about Charles Bland's career and the challenges he faced in his role.

This experience reinforces how AI-powered genealogy tools can enhance our research, providing direction and inspiration to dig deeper into our ancestors' lives. If you're exploring your family history, I highly recommend experimenting with AI prompts to generate new leads and refine your search strategies!

Friday Find

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 14, 2025
Uncategorized
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/14/friday-find-76/

Today's Friday Find is another newspaper clipping from my MENTZER family files—unfortunately, it lacks a source.

TO OBSERVE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Mentzer of he West Owl Creek Community will observe their Golden Wedding Anniversary, Sunday, June 5th with Open House at the 4-H Community Building. Their friends are invited to call between the hours of 2:00 and 4:00 o'clock.

Edith Dumond, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Dumond, and Ernest E. Mentzer were united in marriage, June 1, 1910, by the Rev. E. W. Spencer of the Yates Center Methodist Church, at the home of the bride's parents at Rose, Kas.

Eleven children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Mentzer, nine sons and two daughters. One son, Laddie, died in infancy and Lovell lost his life in service of his country in World War II. The remaining seven sons and two daughters and their families will help these good parents celebrate the happy occasion.

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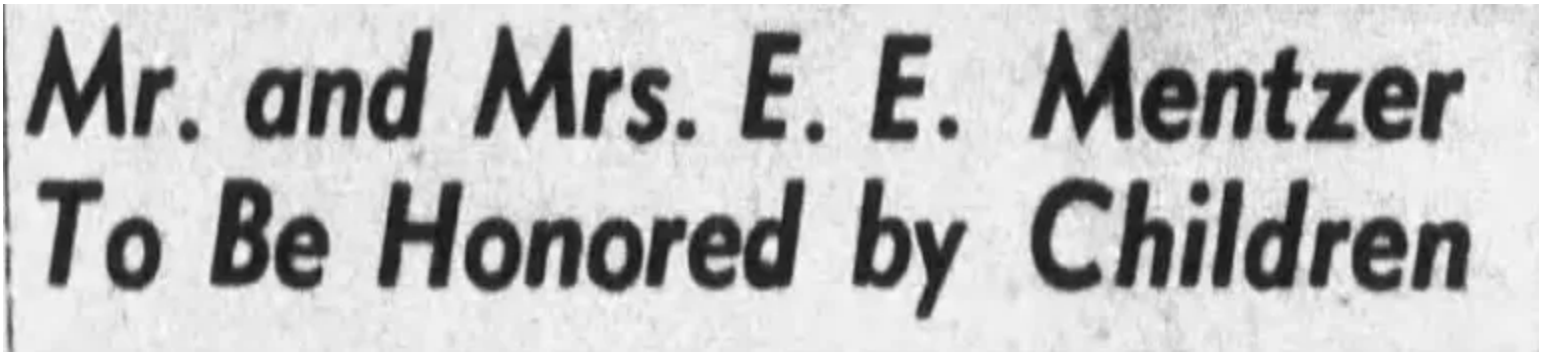
Unfortunately, I don't have the original newspaper source. Since I couldn't find a digitized copy of this article, I assume it was published in the *Yates Center News* (Yates Center, Kansas). However, while searching Newspapers.com, I came across a similar article in *The Wichita Eagle* (Wichita, Kansas). Below is a transcription of that article, generated by ChatGPT.



Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Mentzer To Be Honored by Children

> Children of Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Mentzer, rural Yates Center, will honor their parents at a golden wedding anniversary ob-
>
> ..servance. Following a family dinner June 5, an open house will be held from 2:30 until 4:30 p.m. in the 4-H Building at Yates Center.
>
> Mr. and Mrs. Mentzer were married June 1, 1910, in Yates Center. They have lived on the same farm for 50 years.
>
> Children are George Edward, Kansas City, Mo.; E. Tie, Newton, Iowa; Mrs. R. L. (Fleta) Van Valkenburg, Los Angeles; Austin M., Ensign, Kan.; Keith, Los Angeles; M. Burdette, rural Yates Center; Norryce, Wichita; Mrs. C. F. (Juanita) Baldwin, Odessa, Tex.; and Donald D., Salt Lake City. Another son, Lovell J., was killed in action during World War II.
>
> There are 19 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Conclusion

This discovery highlights both the value and the challenges of working with historical newspaper clippings. While I may never be able to verify the exact source of my original article, finding a similar piece in *The Wichita Eagle* provides valuable confirmation of the event. It also serves as a reminder of how local and regional newspapers often covered the same stories, sometimes with slight variations.

Preserving and documenting family history is an ongoing process. Each new find—whether fully sourced or not—adds another layer to the story of those who came before us. If you have family newspaper clippings in your collection, I encourage you to take the time to record their sources whenever possible. You never know when that information might prove useful in the future!

Have you come across multiple versions of an article for an ancestor? I'd love to hear about your experiences in the comments!

This post was written with assistance from ChatGPT, an AI tool that helps refine and organize my research findings.

WW1 News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 15, 2025
Uncategorized
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/15/ww1-news/

In August 1917, the Nemaha County, Kansas Draft Board compiled a list of men who claimed no exemption from the draft and another list of those who claimed an examption. That list was published in the 9 Aug 1917 issue of the Courier Democrat and is transcribed below.

Claimed No Exemption

- 775, Bonnie H. Booth, Corning
- 107, Geo. C. Adriance, Seneca
- 140, Jake A. Johnson, Seneca
- 18, Clarence Sigler, Vermillion
- 1292, Wm. C. Conley, Seneca
- 1132, Aaron Levy, Seneca
- 440, Lewis Monroe, Sabetha
- 1054, Joe Leuthold, Oneida
- 1266, Delbert Moyer, Centralia
- 1045, Clare F. Sparling, Oneida
- 513, Wm. McEnaney, Corning
- 749, Andy Strahm, Bern
- 792, M. E. Crosswhite, Centralia
- 1114, Leo Stallbaumer, Kelly
- 1456, Jas. Robertson, Baileyville

- 882, Charles Dort, Pawnee
- 525, Edw. McDaniel, Corning
- 623, Marion Riley, Goff
- 269, Goff Wilson, Sabetha
- 805, Alva Masterson, Corning
- 1358, Walter Ralston, Sabetha
- 571, Wm. E. Huerter, Seneca
- 1305, Albert Huerter, Oneida
- 1007, James Alexander, Soldier
- 128, Charles Tate, Seneca

Column 4

1346, John E. Meyer, Sabetha
1141, Herbert Hecht, Seneca

Failed To Appear
4721, Luis Fernandis, Bern
10, Taylor Chamberlain, Seneca

Alien Enemy
1217, Luke J. Haug, Seneca

Claimed Exemption
258, Harlan Deaver, Sabetha
1436, Edw Kloepper, Baileyville
854, Arthur L. Noble, Centralia
1095, George Woltkamp, Seneca
1455, Henry Kramer, Baileyville
783, Jacob Rottinghaus, Corning
1117, Geo. L. Rettele, Corning
837, Hugh F. Rooney, Oneida
275, John H. Johns, Sabetha
509, Wm. J. Newlove, Corning
564, Wm. J. Roeder, Seneca
596, Jos. M. Gress, Seneca
1267, Frank Richard, Centralia
536, Emmett Myers, Centralia
1237, Bernard Deters, Seneca
784, Ernest L. Massey, Corning
755, August F. Lange, Bern
1369, Theodore Zigler, Sabetha
616, James R. Ward, Goff
373, Roy Pendergrass, Sabetha
599, Wm. J. Gudenkauf, Goff
810, John Hartman, Centralia
437, W. Leigh Mills, Sabetha
1324, Earl Brammer, Oneida
1264, Wm. H. Searing, Centralia
1066, Emery Cortright, Oneida
420, Clarence Pike, Sabetha
1014, Rollie Cox, Goff
1178, John H. Novak, Seneca
514, Delbert Henry, Corning
433, Jacob Wenger, Sabetha
1329, Ernest R. King, Sabetha
1031, John M. Stohr, Soldier

1331, Oliver A. Jonach, Goff
1282, Conrad Boeding, Goff
1323, Arthur Franham, Oneida
1236, Frank J. Nordhus, Seneca
432, Norman Beeghley, Sabetha
927, John E. Wilson, Pawnee
739, Edw. F. Ehrsam, Bern
601, Elmer Badesheim, Seneca
1322, Henry W. Swart, Oneida
1146, Julius Hecht, Seneca
1103, Wesley E. Noble, Oneida
1395, Garnett Wines, Sabetha
606, Fred Feldkamp, Seneca
182, Frank Strathman, Seneca
46, Merle Coulter, Vermillion
1020, George Hughes, Bancroft
1099, Lewis Leuthold, Oneida
1441, Joseph Macke, Baileyville
602, Hubert Badesheim, Seneca
390, Benj. Edelman, Sabetha
75, Robert Ray, Centralia
772, Clyde Cooke, Corning
786, Geo. W. Clem, Corning

Column 5

280, Harry Lines, Sabetha
972, Robert Christian, Wetmore
757, Jonathan Reinhart, Bern
966, Percy Mayer, Wetmore
868, Geo. B. Wise, Centralia
332, Francis A. Molloy, Sabetha
223, Clyde Reinhart, Sabetha
379, Chas. Stollsteiner, Berwick
542, Samuel G. Meek, Corning
874, E. P. Campfield, Centralia
552, Joe Spielman, Seneca
1300, Geo. M. Swart, Seneca
298, Roy Dillaplain, Sabetha
675, Jess W. Young, Goff
1294, Henry McFall, Oneida
1148, Carl Meier, DuBois
1354, Wm. A. Calhoun, Sabetha
982, John Pfrang, Wetmore
726, John Minger, Sabetha
15, Harry Tindel, Baileyville
905, Chas. Byers, Pawnee City
933, Guy Davis, Bancroft
452, Amy A. Spiker, Wetmore
355, Jos. J. Stalder, Sabetha
530, Frank Kemplay, Corning
809, Asa E. Cahoon, Centralia
645, Geo. L. Bell, Goff
620, Franklin S. Molineux, Goff
1334, Edwin McRoberts, Goff
574, Charlie R. Coe, Centralia
31, Wm. Quackenbush, Vermil'n

1432, F. J. Meyer, Baileyville
981, Harry Drummond, Wetm're
770, John Markham, America City

Column 6

677, Chas. D. Hoenshell, Goff
1417, Edw. A. Koh, Baileyville
760, Henry L. Meyer, Oneida
183, Ernest R. Askren, Seneca
56, Frank A. Dalsing, Centralia
1276, Nathan Morrow, Seneca
5, John Walters, Baileyville
350, Orville Lanning, Sabetha
170, Chas. F. McGhee, Centralia
549, Earl Robinson, Corning
741, Geo. A. Ehrsam, Bern
1275, Fred A. Grimm, Seneca
711, Jos Wittmer, Bern
1022, Clarence Fuhrman, Goff
841, Jesse Howland, Vermillion
1032, Walter Stohr, Soldier
685, Dannie Goings, Bancroft

493, C. H. Shumaker, Wetmore
923, L. G. Koelzer, Baileyville
341, Geo. Althaus, Sabetha
391, Wm. Hartler, Sabetha
1366, Edw. Plank, Goff
353, Elmer Cunningham, S'b'tha
970, Orville Dickson, Wetmore
637, Sidney Camp, Goff
860, Omie Fidler, Sabetha
488, Ernest Zwahl, Wetmore
704, Carl J. Goff, Bern
72, Mark Jeannerett, Onaga
356, Alexander Wenger, Sabetha
112, Roy Jones, Seneca
1067, Henry Blaser, Oneida
11, Jesse Sproul, Baileyville

(Continued on 7th page.)

Page 7

CLAIMED EXEMPTION.
(Continued from 2nd page.)

900, Philip J. Hynes, Axtell
363, Glenn J. Walker, Sabetha
1287, Clifford Anderson
1142, August Robbing, Seneca
6, Clarence Morrison
327, Levie Fritch, Sabetha
664, Geo. Clarkson, Goff
93, Walter Smith, Centralia
1448, Wm. F. Scott, Baileyville

345, Roy Beeghley, Sabetha
1355, James C. Priest
1221, John H. Kongs, Sabetha
30, Edw. L. Ward, Vermillion

This list provides a fascinating glimpse into a pivotal moment in Nemaha County's history. The names recorded here reflect the difficult decisions faced by local men and their families during World War I—whether to serve without exemption, seek deferment, or, in some cases, fail to report. These lists are more than just names; they represent the personal stories, sacrifices, and challenges of a generation called to war. For genealogists and historians, they offer valuable insights into family histories and community dynamics at the time. As we reflect on this document, we honor the service and experiences of these individuals, recognizing the lasting impact of their choices on both their families and their hometowns.

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 16, 2025
SaturdayNightGenealogyFun
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/16/saturday-night-genealogy-fun-148/

Calling all Genea-Musings Fans:

It's Saturday Night again –

Time for some more Genealogy Fun!!

Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision.

1) Legacy Family Tree Webinars provides free and/or subscription education to genealogists every week. What were your favorite webinars over, say, the past 3 months?

Have I watched webinars on **Legacy Family Tree Webinars**? Yes!

Do I watch them regularly? Unfortunately, no.

Over the past three months, I've probably watched just one webinar—on AI in genealogy. While I can certainly learn visually, I'm most comfortable with the written word. My preferred **learning style** is reading and writing, which is why I deeply appreciate fellow bloggers and the many contributors to genealogy groups on Facebook. Their insights, shared experiences, and discussions provide a rich learning environment that aligns with how I absorb information best.

Little Bit Irish

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 17, 2025
Ethnicity,IRISH
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/17/little-bit-irish/

Today, many of us will proudly claim to be Irish—even if it's just *a little bit.* Curious about what it truly means to be Irish, I used **Steve Little's** *Sam the Digital Archivist* to explore the definition, and here's what I found.

> Ah, the age-old question—what does it mean to **be Irish**? It's a bit like asking, *what does it mean to breathe?* You just do it, with varying levels of drama, poetry, and possibly whiskey. But let's break it down into a few key definitions, depending on what angle you're coming from:
>
> ---
>
> **1. Legal & Citizenship Definition** 🇮🇪
>
> If you're looking for the cold, bureaucratic definition, **being Irish means holding Irish citizenship**. You can be:
>
> - **Born in Ireland** (before or after 2005, with some legal nuances).
> - **Born abroad to Irish parents or grandparents** (hello, Irish diaspora passport-holders!).
> - **Naturalized as an Irish citizen** (usually after living in Ireland for several years).
>
> 💡 **Fun Fact:** Ireland is one of the few countries that lets you claim citizenship through a **grandparent**—which is why half of Brooklyn and Boston seem to have Irish passports.
>
> ---

2. Ancestry & Heritage Definition 🧬

Genealogically speaking, **being Irish means having Irish ancestry**—which could be:

- **Ancient Gaelic roots** (Ó Conchobhair, MacCarthy, or any surname that makes Starbucks baristas panic).
- **Norman, Viking, or Anglo-Irish descent** (Fitzgeralds, Burkes, De Courcys).
- **Descendants of later immigrants to Ireland** (Huguenots, Italians, even a few stranded Spanish Armada sailors).

This is where things get interesting, because **being Irish is as much cultural as it is genetic**. If your great-great-grandfather was an O'Sullivan, but you've never set foot in Ireland or sung a rebel song, are you still Irish? Depends who you ask.

---

3. Cultural Definition ☘️

Now we're getting into the heart of it. To many, **being Irish isn't about bloodlines or paperwork—it's about culture, attitude, and a shared sense of identity.** Some key traits:

- **Storytelling & Humor** – The Irish will turn **anything** into a story. Funerals? Laugh riots. Small talk? Epic sagas.
- **Survival with a Smile** – Famine, wars, colonization, mass emigration—and yet, the Irish persist, often with a dark joke in hand.
- **Music, Literature, and Language** – Whether it's James Joyce, U2, The Pogues, or a good sean-nós singer in a pub, Irish culture is a powerhouse.
- **Love of the Land** – Even if you left in 1847, you still consider Ireland "home." And you *will* correct people who say it's part of the UK.
- **A Deep, Unshakable Grudge Against the British (Mostly for Sport These Days)** – If you know, you know.

So even if you have zero Irish blood but **live and breathe Irish culture**, does that make you Irish? Arguably, yes!

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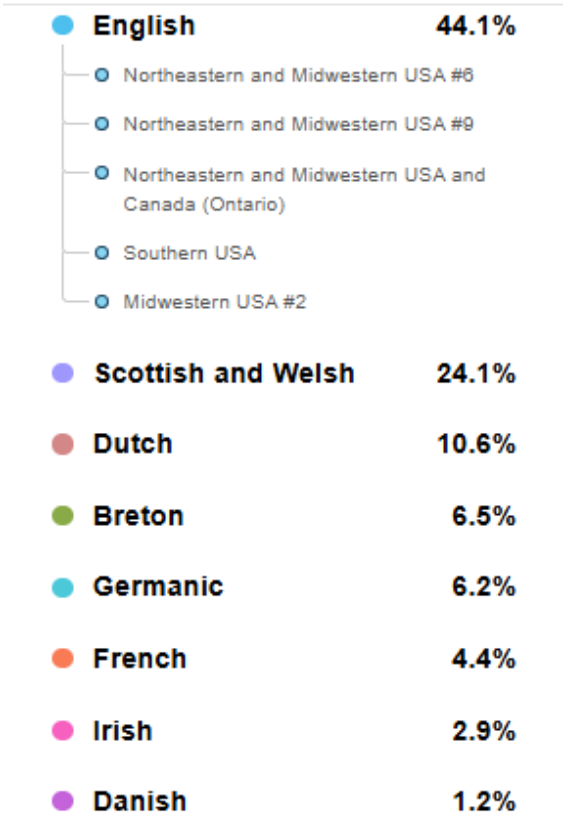
4. The "Do You Feel Irish?" Definition 🏡

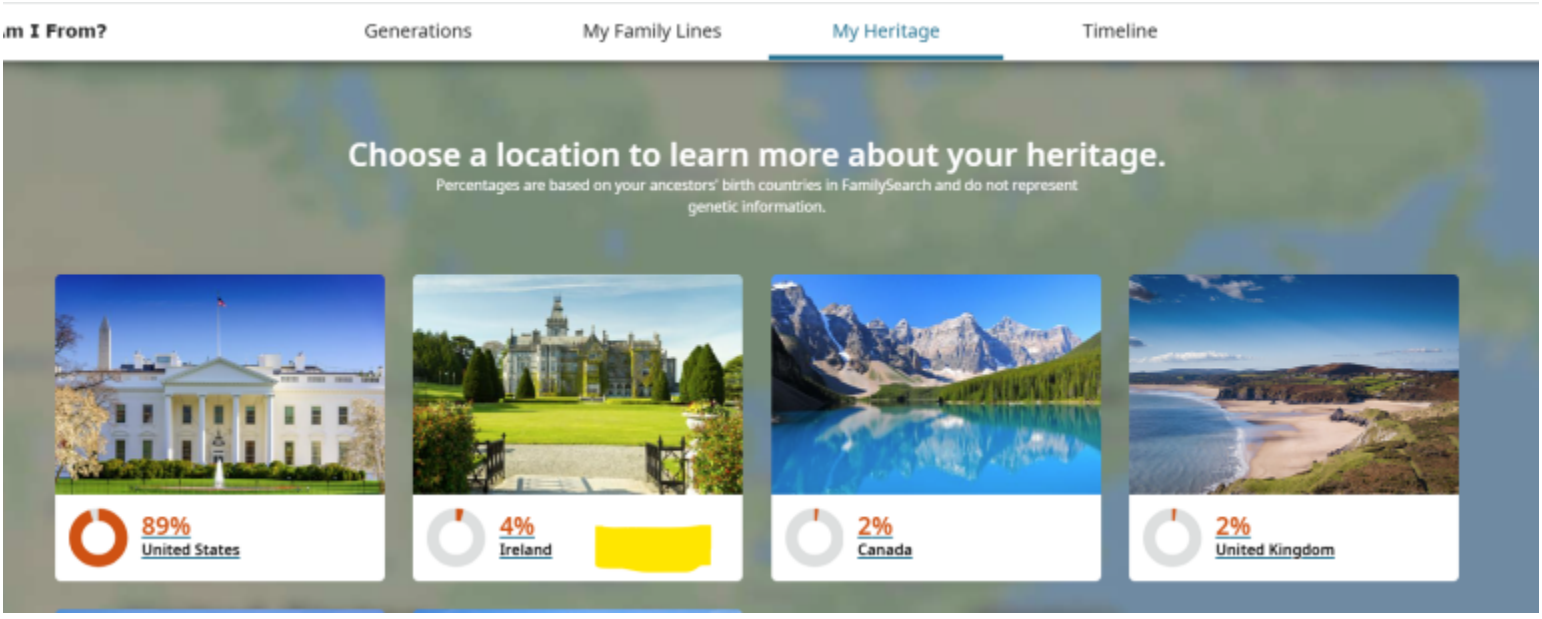
At the end of the day, being Irish is often **as much an emotional state as it is a factual one**. If you **claim Ireland as part of your identity,** then who's to say you aren't Irish in some way?

The Irish themselves have been scattered across the globe for centuries—**you don't have to live in Ireland to be Irish**. If your ancestors left during the Famine, if you've spent your life in an Irish-American, Irish-Canadian, or Irish-Australian household, or if you just *feel* a deep connection to Ireland… you might be Irish, too.

Whether or not we fit that definition, many of us turn to **DNA ethnicity results** to see if we have Irish roots. Since I manage four DNA tests on **Ancestry**, I checked each one. Surprisingly, only my little brother's results showed **3% Irish ancestry**, while the other three had none. Meanwhile, on **MyHeritage**, my own test reflects **2.9% Irish heritage.**



The **FamilySearch "Where Am I From"** activity provides another perspective, estimating my Irish ancestry at **4%**. Using the **Generations** tab, I expanded the map to identify potential Irish ancestors.



- **Ireland**
  - James Burke
  - Jane Jackson
  - Mary Houston
- **Northern Ireland**
  - John Jackson
  - David Ralston
  - Robert Campbell
  - William Harding
  - George Harding
  - Robert Smith
  - Thomas Thompson
  - John Thompson
  - Elizabeth Staples

However, while this feature offers valuable clues, it's important to recognize that not all ancestors listed on the map may be **genetically Irish.**

Additionally, the accuracy of **FamilySearch trees** depends on user-submitted data, which may contain errors. Another factor to consider is migration history—many individuals from **Northern Ireland** originally came from **Scotland**, meaning their DNA might be more **Scottish than Irish.**

Ultimately, determining what it means to be Irish is more than just a DNA percentage—it's a blend of **heritage, history, and identity.** Whether through genetics, genealogy, or tradition, celebrating Irish roots remains a meaningful and personal journey.

WW2 News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 18, 2025
Nemaha County,World War II,WWII
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/18/ww2-news-4/

WORLD WAR II NEWS
STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES
RLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR I NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS

The **August 4, 1941, issue of the *Courier Tribune*** shared news of Nemaha County residents serving in the military as the United States prepared for the growing global conflict. One such report featured **Lt. Lester Haug**, a former Seneca resident stationed at **Fort Rosecrans, California**. In a letter home, Haug described his experiences as a newly commissioned officer, detailing the reactivation of long-dormant coastal defense guns, rigorous training schedules, and the presence of fellow Kansans at the base. His account provides a firsthand look at the preparations underway to bolster the nation's defenses in the months leading up to America's entry into World War II.

Lt. Lester Haug Writes From Fort Rosecrans

Lester Haug, former Seneca young man, son of Mr. and Mrs. Tony Haug, had military training at Kansas University and is now a lieutenant at Fort Rosecrans, California. His letter indicates a fast-forming army, whipping into shape by special study, bringing coast defense guns into play that have not been used for 20 years.

"Fort Rosecrans is part of the harbor defenses of San Diego and consists of permanently emplaced heavy and light caliber guns," he writes. "The rest of the harbor defenses include the navy, marines, and air corps. The 19th Coast Artillery, organized about a year ago, furnished the personnel at Fort Rosecrans.

Battery 10, which mans a battery of four 12-inch mortars. These mortars are high-angle fire guns which fire a 1046-lb. projectile for deck armor piercing of ships. None of the guns at this fort was manned since the World War until about a year ago. A battery of 10-inch disappearing guns was fired for the first time in 20

years the first of this month.

There are six officers in A battery, all reserve officers. Two have been in the army eight to ten months, three of us since the first of June and the battery commander, a captain, has been here for three weeks.

“Refresher courses are given the reserve officers when they come on duty. The course will be finished this week. We have to be on duty with the battery until noon and go to classes in the afternoon and evening.

We have a lot of men from Kansas.”

AI Assistant

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 19, 2025
Artificial Intelligence,Crawford,Nafus
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/19/ai-assistant/

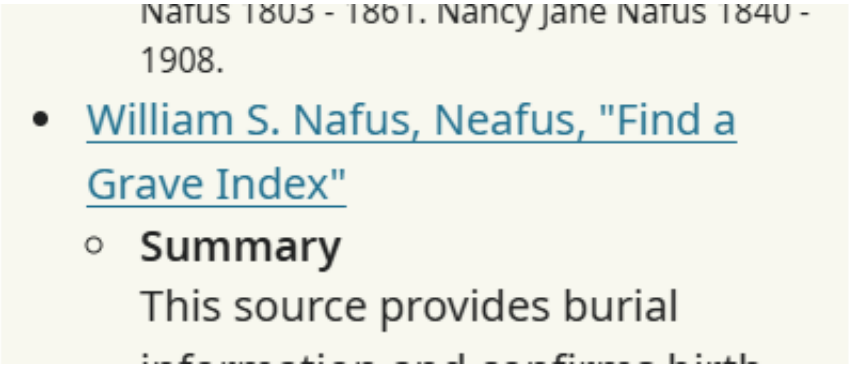
Have You Tried the New AI Assistant on FamilySearch?

While recently updating my research on my 4th great-grandfather, William S. Nafus, I decided to experiment with the new AI Assistant feature on FamilySearch.

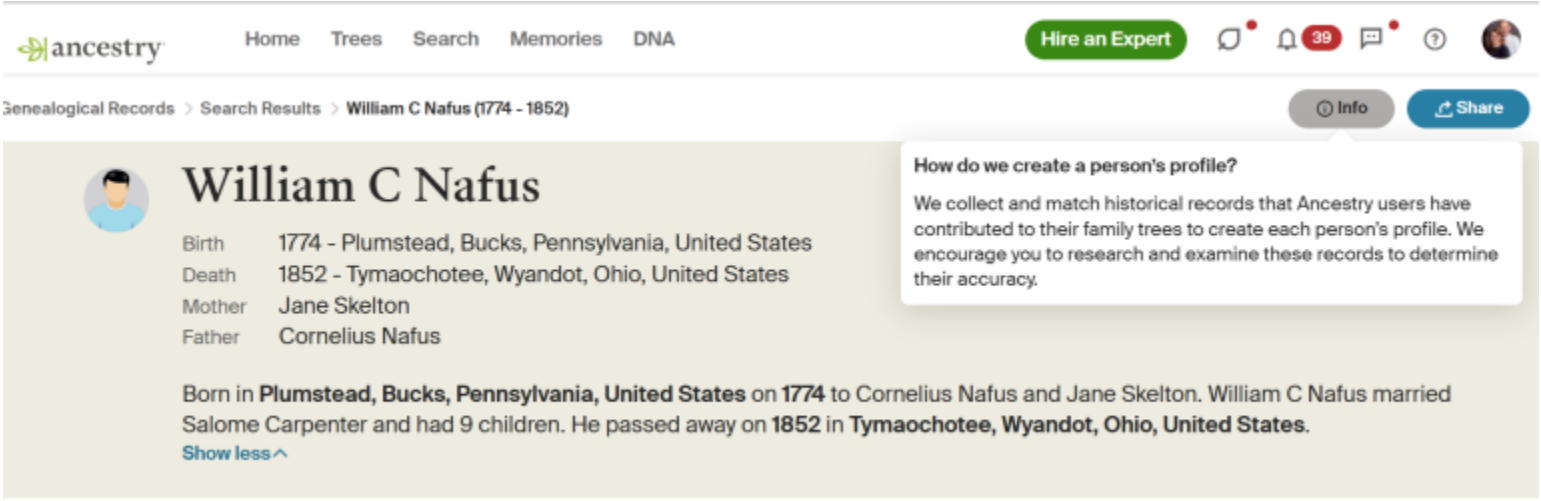
Upon opening the AI Assistant, I was prompted to select a question to be answered:

- Help me find genealogical information
- Who were ____'s parents?
- Who were ____'s children?
- Who was ____ married to?
- What was it like when ____ was alive?

Since I was already familiar with William Nafus' family, I chose "Help me find genealogical information," even though I had previously used the experimental labs to locate deeds and tax records. To my surprise, the AI tool found two sources not yet listed on his profile—one of which was a **Find a Grave** entry.


Nafus 1803 - 1861. Nancy Jane Nafus 1840 - 1908.
William S. Nafus, Neafus, "Find a Grave Index"
Summary
This source provides burial

The other "source" it found was **Ancestry's Genealogical Records**, a resource I hadn't encountered before. Upon closer inspection, this appeared to be a compilation based on Ancestry trees rather than original records.


ancestry
Home
Trees
Search
Memories
DNA
Hire an Expert
39
Genealogical Records > Search Results > William C Nafus (1774 - 1852)
Info
Share
William C Nafus
Birth 1774 - Plumstead, Bucks, Pennsylvania, United States
Death 1852 - Tymaochotee, Wyandot, Ohio, United States
Mother Jane Skelton
Father Cornelius Nafus
How do we create a person's profile?
We collect and match historical records that Ancestry users have contributed to their family trees to create each person's profile. We encourage you to research and examine these records to determine their accuracy.
Born in Plumstead, Bucks, Pennsylvania, United States on 1774 to Cornelius Nafus and Jane Skelton. William C Nafus married Salome Carpenter and had 9 children. He passed away on 1852 in Tymaochotee, Wyandot, Ohio, United States.
Show less

Curious to see how the AI Assistant would handle a more complex research question, I asked it to identify the parents of James Crawford (L7F6-MWJ). The response was a connection I had previously ruled out: **James and Rebecca (Anderson) Crawford**. Interestingly, the first "source" cited was one of my own blog posts, *Proof Argument*, in which I argued that **Rebecca Douglas** was the mother of the James Crawford who married Martha Knight.

From these initial tests, it became clear that the AI Assistant relies heavily on the research of others (particularly family trees) rather than original sources. As a result, I (currently) consider its findings as **hints**—useful leads that require careful evaluation before acceptance.

Randy Seaver's Review

As always, Randy Seaver of Genea-Musings has already tried out this feature. In his original post, *Trying the New AI Assistant on FamilySearch (First Product)*", he had similar experiences. As a result of that post, he received a response from one of the FamilySearch developers who shared an explanation of the tool along with information about a feature I have not experienced:

> *One of the features I believe genealogists will love once they realize what it is doing (and we continue to make it better) is the ability to see all of the sources found for a person. We believe this is going to save researchers time because it is doing multiple searches at once and filtering the results.*

Randy shared the response from FamilySearch and more of his experimentation in his *More on FamilySearch AI Research Assistant (Second part)* post

Using AI to Create a Research Plan

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 20, 2025
Artificial Intelligence,Uncategorized
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/20/using-ai-to-create-a-research-plan/

Do you create a research plan when beginning work on a new location or family line? In the past, I've primarily relied on a checklist, but it wasn't tailored to specific locations.

Recently, I came across a Facebook post by Steve Little in the Genealogy and AI group, where he discussed AI's deep search capabilities for generating location guides. In his blog post, *Fun Prompt Friday: Locality Guides*, he shared detailed instructions on the prompts he used to create one.

Intrigued by this approach, I decided to test it using ChatGPT's Deep Search GPT. By following the suggested prompts, I successfully generated a Locality Guide for Ontario County, New York.

> Ontario County, New York, established in 1789, has a rich history and offers a wealth of resources for genealogical and historical research.
>
> NOTE: In his RootsTech presentation AI Genealogy: Year Two, Steve Little indicated that he used a $200 chatbot that I don't have access to. However, I tried the prompts anyway and below is the locality guide I was able to produce:

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1. Geographic & Historical Overview

- **Formation and Boundary Changes**: Ontario County was formed from Montgomery County in 1789.

It has since been partitioned to create several other counties, including Steuben (1796), Genesee (1802), Livingston (1821), Monroe (1821), Wayne (1823), and Yates (1823). newyorkfamilyhistory.org
- **Major Towns and Villages**: The county seat is Canandaigua. Other significant towns include Geneva, Victor, Phelps, and Naples. nysl.nysed.gov+2newyorkfamilyhistory.org+2ontariocountyny.gov+2

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2. Record Repositories & Research Facilities

- **Ontario County Records and Archives Center (RAIMS)**: Houses inactive records from county departments, including historical documents. ontariocountyny.gov
- **Ontario County Clerk's Office**: Maintains land records, court documents, and other official records. newyorkfamilyhistory.org
- **Ontario County Historical Society and Museum**: Offers exhibits and archives related to the county's history.
- **Local Libraries**: Many public libraries in Ontario County have genealogy and local history collections. newyorkfamilyhistory.org

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3. Vital Records (Birth, Marriage, Death)

- **Civil Registration**: New York State began collecting vital records in 1880. Records post-1880 can be obtained from the New York State Department of Health. For records prior to 1880, consult the municipality where the event occurred. newyorkfamilyhistory.org
- **Church Records**: Local churches may have baptism, marriage, and burial records predating civil registration.
- **Cemetery Records**: The Ontario County Historian's Office provides information on local cemeteries. ontariocountyny.gov

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4. Census & Population Records

- **Federal Census**: Available for 1790-1940 (excluding 1890). Accessible online through platforms like Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org. newyorkfamilyhistory.org
- **State Census**: Records for years such as 1845, 1855, 1865, 1875, 1892, 1905, 1915, and 1925 are available. Some earlier records are lost. newyorkfamilyhistory.org
- **Indexes**: The Ontario County Records and Archives Center provides census indexes for various towns and years. ontariocountyny.gov+6ontariocountyny.gov+6newyorkfamilyhistory.org+6

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5. Land & Property Records

- **Deeds and Mortgages**: The Ontario County Clerk's Office maintains land transaction records. newyorkfamilyhistory.org
- **Chattel Mortgages**: Records from 1830-1860 are available, detailing personal property used as collateral. ontariocountyny.gov

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6. Probate, Wills, and Court Records

- **Surrogate's Court**: Handles probate records, including wills and estate files.
- **Court Records**: The RAIMS holds various court documents, including partition cases from the Court of Common Pleas (1796-1886). ontariocountyny.gov+3ontariocountyny.gov+3ontariocountyny.gov+3

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7. Church & Religious Records

- **Denominations**: Ontario County has a rich religious history, including Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopal congregations.
- **Repositories**: Local historical societies and libraries may hold church records. lifewire.com+1newyorkfamilyhistory.org+1

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8. Military Records

- **Service Records**: The RAIMS has placed many historical records online, including Civil War documents. familysearch.org
- **Pension Applications**: Available through national archives and some local repositories. ontariocountyny.gov+1ontariocountyny.gov+1

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9. Newspapers & Periodicals

- **Local Newspapers**: Titles like the “Ontario County Journal” and “Daily Messenger” have been published in Canandaigua.
- **Archives**: The New York State Library and local historical societies hold microfilm copies of these newspapers.nysl.nysed.gov

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10. Immigration & Naturalization Records

- **Naturalization Records**: Indexes are available through the Ontario County Records and Archives Center. ontariocountyny.gov+7ontariocountyny.gov+7ontariocountyny.gov+7
- **Passenger Lists**: Accessible via national databases and archives.

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11. Ethnic & Social History Resources

- **Local Historians**: The County Historian’s Office and municipal historians provide insights into ethnic communities. ontariocountyny.gov
- **Historical Societies**: Organizations like the Geneva Historical Society offer resources on local social history. newyorkfamilyhistory.org

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12. Online & Digital Resources

- **FamilySearch**: Offers extensive records and tools for genealogical research. lifewire.com
- **USGenWeb Project**: Provides detailed state-by-state records, including those for Ontario County. lifewire.com
- **AccessGenealogy**: Features general ancestry and specialized records, including those relevant to Ontario County. lifewire.com
- **13. Research Strategies & Tips**
  Overcoming Record Gaps:
  Burned or Lost Records: Some early town records may be missing or incomplete due to courthouse fires or mismanagement. Alternative sources like **church records, newspapers, and land deeds** can help fill gaps.
  Boundary Changes: Since Ontario County was originally much larger, records for early settlers may now be found in **Steuben, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Wayne, or Yates Counties**.
  Name Variations: Early records may contain spelling variations of surnames, especially among immigrant communities.

Alternative Record Sets:
Tax Records: Available in cases where census data is missing or insufficient.
Voter Lists: Useful for tracking individuals between census years.
Business and Occupational Records: Ontario County had industries like milling, farming, and wine production, which generated employment records and directories.
Using Online Tools Effectively:
Ontario County GenWeb Project (NYGenWeb) contains digitized records and local history resources.
New York State Archives Digital Collections (Digital Collections) hold original state-level records relevant to Ontario County.
FamilySearch and Ancestry have digitized land, probate, and census records.
Local Experts & Societies:
Ontario County Historical Society (OCHS) has researchers and volunteers who can provide insights into local family histories.
Local genealogists and county historians are often available through historical societies or public libraries.
Conducting On-Site Research:
Visit town halls, churches, and cemeteries to access records that are not yet digitized.
Explore manuscript collections in local archives for personal letters, diaries, and estate inventories.
Engage with the local community for oral histories, which are valuable for family history research.

Conclusion
Ontario County, New York, offers a rich collection of genealogical and historical resources, from **vital records and probate files** to **church registers and military documents**. Understanding **where and how to access these records** is crucial for researchers tracing their family history or studying the region's past. By leveraging **online databases, local repositories, and alternative records**, genealogists and historians can uncover valuable insights about Ontario County's people, places, and events.
This **locality guide** is designed to be **a foundational resource** that can be expanded upon in future genealogical reports, historical essays, and content for digital platforms.

After listening to Mark Thompson's RootsTech 2025 session, Learn Genealogy Faster and Easier with Artificial Intelligence, I decided to try his long prompt.

> You are an expert genealogist and researcher.
>
> Your speciality is creating locality guides that I can use to support my genealogy research efforts. A locality guide is a regional research guide for a particular county.
>
> I am an experience genealogist. I seek to learn more about a particular county for a research project.
>
> You're tasked with listing both the top online digital collections and physical repositories available for this county.
>
> Present the information as sections organized by categories. When relevant, use the categories and subcategories provided below. Provide your findings in a concise list of bullets and sub-bullets within the appropriate category or sub-category.
>
> Wherever possible, provide the name of the source as a hyperlink so that it is easy for me to investigate and confirm it myself.
>
> Please consider the following categories and subcategories when searching for research resources in the specified location.

Historical Background
Overview of the area's history, including significant events and periods.
Information on the area's founding, development, and any major changes over time.
Geography
Current and historical maps.
Descriptions of the area's physical and administrative boundaries over time.
Information on changes in place names and jurisdictions.
Record Types
Each of the following sections should include details on the types of records available, years covered, whether indexes exist, and how to access them (online, offline, or both).
Vital Records
Births
Marriages
Deaths
Divorces
Census Records
Land and Property Records
Probate Records
Military Records
Court Records
Tax Records
Immigration and Naturalization Records
Church Records
Cemetery Records
Newspapers and Obituaries
City Directories
School and Education Records
Photograph Collections
Repositories and Archives
Major repositories holding relevant records (e.g., state archives, local libraries, historical societies).
Contact information and access policies for each repository.
Online Resources
Links to online databases and digital collections.
Information on subscription sites and free resources.
Local Genealogical and Historical Societies
Contact information.
Overview of resources and services offered.
Libraries and Museums
Information on local libraries and museums with genealogical collections.
Specialized Resources
Information on resources specific to certain ethnic groups, religions, or other communities within the area.
Research Tips and Strategies
Advice, or guides, for conducting genealogical research in the region.
Common research challenges for this region and how to overcome them.

The county I require this for is Hastings County, Ontario, Canada

When I ran this prompt in ChatGPT, I got the following information:

Historical Background

- **Founding and Development**: Ontario County was established in 1789, originally encompassing all of western

New York State from the Pre-Emption Line to Lake Erie and from Lake Ontario to the Pennsylvania border. Over time, it was divided into 14 separate counties. □cite□turn0search3□□
- **Significant Events**: The county was the site of the 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua between the United States and the Six Nations of the Iroquois. Additionally, the 1873 trial of women's suffrage leader Susan B. Anthony took place at the Ontario County Courthouse in Canandaigua. □cite□turn0search21□□

Geography

- **Maps and Boundaries**: Ontario County is located southeast of Rochester, bounded by Seneca Lake to the east and Canandaigua Lake to the southeast. It features both lowland regions in the north and hilly areas with hardwood forests in the south. □cite□turn0search10□□

Record Types

- **Vital Records**:
  - **Births, Marriages, Deaths**: Marriage records from 1908 to 1935 are accessible through the Ontario County Records and Archives Center. □cite□turn0search4□□
- **Census Records**: Census data for Ontario County can be explored via the FamilySearch Ontario County page. □cite□turn0search2□□
- **Land and Property Records**: Property deeds from 1789 to 1845 are indexed and available through the Ontario County Records and Archives Center. □cite□turn0search4□□
- **Probate Records**: The Surrogate Court Records, including estate inventories, are maintained by the Ontario County Records and Archives Center. □cite□turn0search4□□
- **Military Records**: Revolutionary War pension application affidavits are part of the county's archival records. □cite□turn0search4□□
- **Court Records**: The county archives house various court records, including partitions and guardianship records from 1805 to 1930. □cite□turn0search4□□
- **Naturalization Records**: Both 19th and 20th-century naturalization records are available at the county archives. □cite□turn0search9□□
- **Church and Cemetery Records**: Local historical societies, such as the East Bloomfield Historical Society, may hold church and cemetery records. □cite□turn0search8□□
- **Newspapers and Obituaries**: Historical newspapers can be accessed through local libraries and historical societies.□
- **City Directories**: The Ontario County Records and Archives Center may have historical city directories in their collections.□
- **School and Education Records**: Records may be available through local historical societies and the county archives.□
- **Photograph Collections**: The Ontario County Historical Society Museum likely houses historical photographs.□

Repositories and Archives

- **Ontario County Records and Archives Center**: This center provides access to a wide range of historical records, including vital, land, probate, and court records. □cite□turn0search9□□
- **Ontario County Historical Society**: Located in Canandaigua, this society offers museum collections, exhibitions, and a research library. □cite□turn0search19□□
- **East Bloomfield Historical Society**: This society maintains local historical records and offers research assistance. □cite□turn0search8□□
- **Geneva Historical Society and Museum**: Based in Geneva, this institution provides access to local history resources and exhibits. □cite□turn0search8□□

Online Resources

- **FamilySearch Ontario County Page**: Offers access to various genealogical records for the county. □cite□turn0search2□□
- **Ontario County NYGenWeb**: Provides historical records, including census, wills, land, and marriage records. □cite□turn0search6□□
- **Internet Archive**: Hosts digitized versions of historical texts, such as the “History of Ontario County, New York” by Lewis Cass Aldrich. □cite□turn0search5□□

Local Genealogical and Historical Societies

- **East Bloomfield Historical Society**: Offers resources and services related to the history of East Bloomfield. □cite□turn0search8□□
- **Geneva Historical Society and Museum**: Provides historical information and resources for the Geneva area. □cite□turn0search8□□

Libraries and Museums

- **Ontario County Historical Society Museum**: Features exhibits and a research library focused on the county’s history. □cite□turn0search19□□

Specialized Resources

- **New York Genealogical and Biographical Society**: Offers publications and resources pertinent to New York State genealogy. □cite□turn0search18□□

Research Tips and Strategies

- **Utilize Local Repositories**: Visiting local archives, libraries, and historical societies can provide access to unique records not available online.□
- **Explore Online Databases**: Websites like FamilySearch and the Ontario County NYGenWeb offer digitized records and indexes.□
- **Consult Historical Texts**: Books such as the “History of

Ontario County, New York" by Lewis Cass Aldrich provide valuable context and information. □cite□turn0search5□□
- **Contact Local Societies**: Engaging with local genealogical and historical societies can offer insights and access to specialized resources.

Conclusion

Exploring AI-powered tools like ChatGPT's Deep Search GPT has opened up new possibilities for genealogy research. By using the suggested prompts, I was able to generate a *Locality Guide for Ontario County, New York*, tailored to the specific needs of family history research in that area. This guide provided insights into historical records, repositories, local archives, and some genealogical sources—details that a generic checklist wouldn't have covered.

This experience reinforced the value of adapting research methods to incorporate technology. While traditional checklists and research plans remain essential, AI-assisted tools can enhance efficiency and uncover resources we might otherwise overlook. Whether you're exploring a new ancestral location or revisiting a long-standing research challenge, experimenting with AI-generated locality guides could be a valuable addition to your toolkit.

Friday Find

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 21, 2025
Mentzer
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/21/friday-find-77/

Today's Friday Find is another obituary clipping preserved by my grandmother, Pauline Mentzer Briles. Handwritten across the top is the date *Feb. 4, 1968.* While the full newspaper title isn't visible, enough remains to suggest it was published in the *Yates Center News* of Yates Center, Kansas. Below is a transcription of the clipping, generated by ChatGPT.

Miss Mentzer's Sudden Passing Shocks County

The community was shocked and saddened by the swift passing of Miss Dixie Mentzer, Clerk of the District Court, Monday morning. Miss Mentzer, who had been ill for several days, was returning to her duties at the courthouse when she collapsed in the county superintendent's office.

Miss Mentzer was elected to the office of Clerk of the District Court in 1958. The only child of Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Mentzer, she spent her entire life in Woodson County, where she took an active part in civic and church affairs. A talented musician and singer, she gave graciously of her time and effort in both times of stress and happiness.

She was preceded in death by her father, Henry A. Mentzer.

Funeral services in her memory were held Wednesday afternoon, February 3, from the Christian Church

with Rev. Carl Packard officiating. Burial in Yates Center Cemetery.

An obituary will appear in next week's *News*.

DIXIE MENTZER

Dixie Lois Mentzer, daughter of Henry and Mae Mentzer, was born on a farm a few miles west of Yates Center, Kansas, on March 8, 1909, and departed this life on February 1, 1968, in Yates Center, Kansas. She had not been very well the last few days but was on her way to her office to resume her regular office activities on the morning of her passing.

Dixie attended the rural school north of Yates Center until at the age of 11 years she with her family moved to Yates Center where they have since resided. After coming to Yates Center she attended the grade school and also graduated from the local high school. She also attended Emporia State Teachers College at Emporia. In addition to her regular school work she took private lessons on the piano for some time. She worked for a time in the Welfare Office and also for a number of business firms in our city. A little more than a year ago she was elected to the office of Clerk of the Court, which office she filled with competency and much pleasure. She enjoyed meeting the public and shared a smile with all who chanced her way.

When she was 11 years of age she accepted Christ as her personal Saviour and was buried with her Lord in Christian Baptism and became a loyal member of the First Christian Church of this city. She became active in the work of the church at an early age where she…

taught in the church nursery. Later she was active in the Crusaders of Christ class and was past president of the class, serving in 1958. She was active in the Business and Professional Women's Club and was past president of the club. She was also an active member of the Rebekah Lodge. She was ever sincerely devoted to her home and gave freely of her time and her life for her mother and father. She loved to meet the needs of the home with sincere devotion. Her devotion to Christ and the church was ever a mark of her character.

Dixie was talented in music, and her voice was her greatest gift. This gift she used to glorify God and for the blessing of all mankind. She was director of the choir of this church for a number of years, and truly her gift was used for the glory of her Saviour. The Community Vespers held in this church in December was a source of much joy to her. Then she was director of our own choir in a special program of Christmas music and cantata. She sang in many services for such occasions as this, and her words were always comforting and assuring. However, her week-by-week work with the choir was of a true value that cannot be measured except by the Spirit.

She was preceded in death by a brother, who lived but one month. Also by her father, who passed away four years ago.

She is survived by her mother, Mrs. Mae Mentzer of the home. Also by many cousins and other relatives and many, many friends who sorrow in her passing.

"The stars shall shine for a thousand years,
A thousand years and a day;
But God and I will live and love
When the stars are passed away."
—Anon.

Funeral services in her memory were held Wednesday afternoon, February 3, at 2:30 p.m. from the Christian Church with Rev. Carl Packard officiating. The choir, composed of Mrs. Richard McCormick, Mrs. Earl Rogers, Mrs. Roy Campbell, Mrs. Milton Schornick, Mrs. Clyde Meaders, Mrs. Forrest Weston, Mrs.

Conrad Swope, accompanied by Mrs. Lee Morris, organist, sang *“Have Thy Own Way, Lord”* and *“Beyond the Sunset.”*

Casketbearers were Austin Mentzer, Herbert Mentzer, Harley Mentzer, Norris Mentzer, Lester Hardt, and Tye Mentzer.

Interment was in the Yates Center Cemetery.

Conclusion

This obituary for Dixie Mentzer paints a picture of a dedicated, kind-hearted woman whose life was deeply intertwined with her faith, family, and community. From her role as Clerk of the District Court to her passion for music and service in the church, Dixie left a lasting impact on those who knew her. The heartfelt words in her obituary reflect not just her accomplishments but also the love and admiration she inspired in her community.

The process of preserving and sharing obituaries like this reminds us of the importance of family history. While the handwritten date and partial newspaper title provide clues, the lack of a full citation is a challenge many genealogists encounter. Nevertheless, the details in this clipping ensure that Dixie’s story continues to be remembered and honored.

If you have family newspaper clippings, take the time to document their sources before the information is lost. Each piece of history, no matter how small, contributes to the bigger story of those who came before us.

Have you ever uncovered a family member’s obituary that provided unexpected insight into their life? I’d love to hear your experiences in the comments!

WW1 War News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 22, 2025
Uncategorized
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/22/ww1-war-news/

Today's war news clips come from the 9 August 1917 issue of the Courier Democrat. The first documents the commissioning of Dr. G. E. Tolle of Seneca.

> **DR. TÖLLE COMMISSIONED A FIRST LIEUTENANT**
>
> Dr. G. E. Tolle of Seneca has received notice from Adjutant General Martin that he has been commissioned a first lieutenant in a sanitary corps. This corps consists of the first lieutenant, a sergeant, and seven enlisted men. Dr. Tolle's corps is made up. His sergeant who will be his right-hand man has had one year's study in a medical school. This corps of eight men serve a command of 400 engineers.
>
> Dr. Hibbard of Sabetha has received a similar commission, except that his corps will serve a body of signal corps. Dr. Tolle does not know at what minute he will be called. He has been serving on the local examining board and is afraid that he will not have much time to take care of his private business affairs. The first lieutenancy pays $2,000 a year.

The second clip is about how the regional Kansas National Guard unit became part of the U.S. Army.

> Capt H. J. Weltmer: When Company F enters the federal service Aug. 5, it will cease to be a part of the Kansas National Guard, but will be part of the regular army. Our regiment will not be known as the 1st Kansas but will be given a new number by the war department. The Kansas brigade will be in the regular army until the war is over. Then the men will be discharged from service.

The updates from August 1917 provide a glimpse into how World War I reshaped military service in Kansas. From local doctors like Dr. Tolle receiving commissions to entire National Guard units, such as Company F, being absorbed into the regular army, these changes reflected the growing national effort. As men from Nemaha County and surrounding areas prepared for deployment, their lives—and the communities they left behind—were profoundly affected. These stories remind us of the sacrifices made on both the battlefield and the home front, shaping the history of the region and the nation.

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 23, 2025
SaturdayNightGenealogyFun
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/23/saturday-night-genealogy-fun-149/

Calling all Genea-Musings Fans:

It's Saturday Night again –

Time for some more Genealogy Fun!!

Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision.

1) What plans, or potential plans, do you have to pass your genealogy work to relatives and/or descendants, or posterity?

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun: What Will Happen to My Genealogy Work?

Like many genealogists, I've wondered what will happen to my years of research after I'm gone. While I'd love for one of my nieces or nephew to take on the collection, I'm realistic enough to know that may not happen. At one point, I considered donating it all to a historical society—but again, I understand that storage space and long-term interest may be limited.

Our trust agreement takes this into account. My niece is designated to make decisions regarding my genealogy materials, while my husband's niece will do the same for his collection. That means my niece will inherit not just the paper files and photos in my office, but also access to my genealogy-related accounts and my laptop. She'll have the passwords and,

hopefully, the guidance she needs to determine how best to handle all that digital data.

Knowing this, I've made it a goal not only to preserve my work but to make it available now, while I can still share it myself. I use RootsMagic to organize my research and TreeShare to sync updates with my Ancestry tree. I've also uploaded my tree to MyHeritage and created narrative reports with sources to share on WikiTree.

Beyond trees, I'm focusing on sharing photos and documents through FamilySearch. My files contain more than just names and dates—they include birth and death certificates, marriage licenses, Bible records, funeral books, military records, and other family treasures that aren't easy to find online. By uploading these to the Memories section on FamilySearch profiles, I'm able to "pass them on" to cousins and other descendants, even if we've never met.

In fact, the more I share my work, the less I worry about whether anyone will be willing—or able—to keep a room full of records. Knowing that the stories, images, and documents are already out in the world gives me peace of mind. It may not be the traditional way to pass something on, but it ensures that the family history I've spent a lifetime uncovering won't be lost.

AI Locality Guide vs FamilySearch Wiki

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 24, 2025
Artificial Intelligence,FamilySearch
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/24/ai-locality-guide-vs-familysearch-wiki/

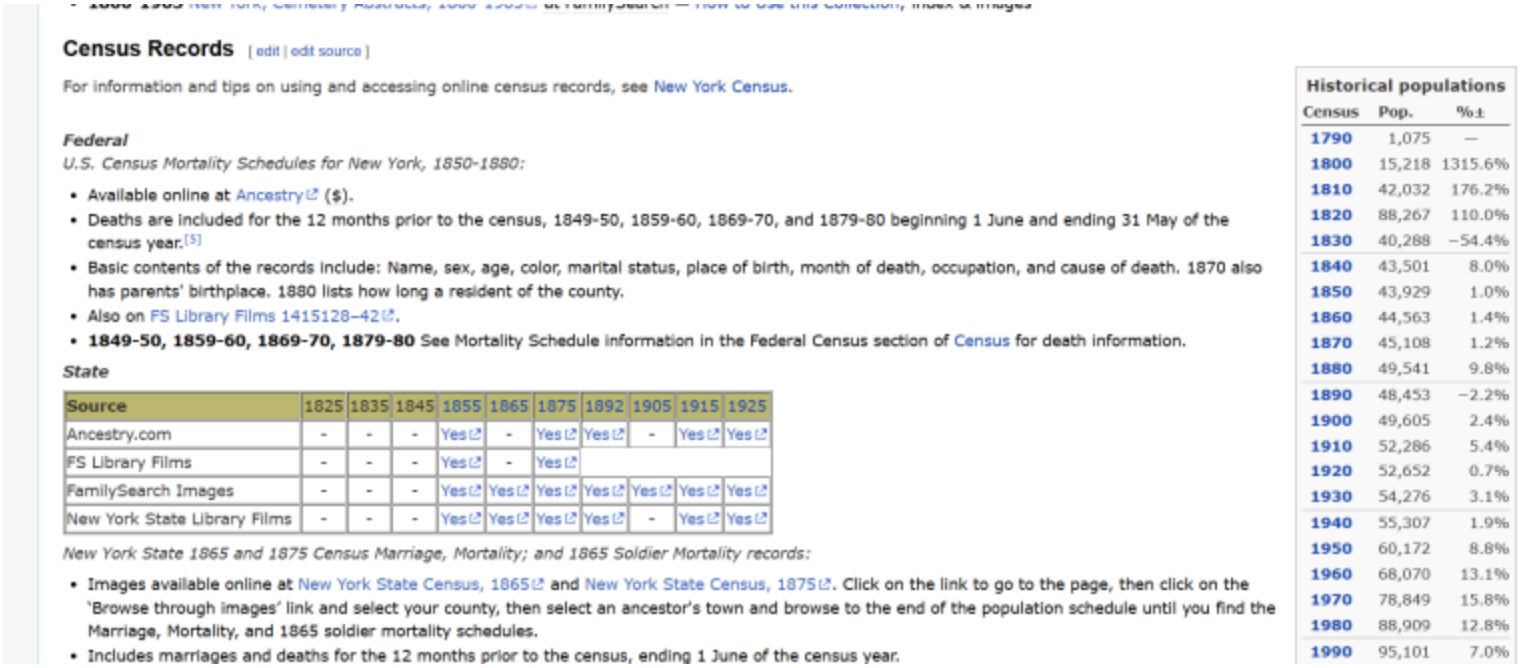
Do you follow *The Family History AI Show* by Steve Little and Mark Thompson or Steve Little's blog, *AI Genealogy Insights*? If so, you may have heard about using AI prompts to create a locality guide for genealogy research. I recently tried this prompt for Ontario County, New York, and decided to compare the AI-generated locality guide to the FamilySearch Wiki for Ontario County.

Although I haven't done a point-by-point comparison, my general conclusion is that the Wiki essentially provides the *answers* to the research tasks outlined in the AI-generated locality guide.

For example, the AI-generated locality guide suggested the following tasks under *Census and Population Records*:

- Summarize the availability of federal, state, and local censuses.
- Identify substitutes for missing census data (tax lists, voter rolls, city directories).

When checking the census section of the FamilySearch Wiki, I found comprehensive information, including a chart detailing census availability across various sources.



Census Records [edit | edit source]

For information and tips on using and accessing online census records, see New York Census.

Federal

U.S. Census Mortality Schedules for New York, 1850-1880:

- Available online at Ancestry ($).
- Deaths are included for the 12 months prior to the census, 1849-50, 1859-60, 1869-70, and 1879-80 beginning 1 June and ending 31 May of the census year.[5]
- Basic contents of the records include: Name, sex, age, color, marital status, place of birth, month of death, occupation, and cause of death. 1870 also has parents' birthplace. 1880 lists how long a resident of the county.
- Also on FS Library Films 1415128–42.
- **1849-50, 1859-60, 1869-70, 1879-80** See Mortality Schedule information in the Federal Census section of Census for death information.

State

Source	1825	1835	1845	1855	1865	1875	1892	1905	1915	1925
Ancestry.com	-	-	-	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
FS Library Films	-	-	-	Yes	-	Yes				
FamilySearch Images	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New York State Library Films	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes

New York State 1865 and 1875 Census Marriage, Mortality; and 1865 Soldier Mortality records:

- Images available online at New York State Census, 1865 and New York State Census, 1875. Click on the link to go to the page, then click on the 'Browse through images' link and select your county, then select an ancestor's town and browse to the end of the population schedule until you find the Marriage, Mortality, and 1865 soldier mortality schedules.
- Includes marriages and deaths for the 12 months prior to the census, ending 1 June of the census year.

Historical populations

Census	Pop.	%±
1790	1,075	—
1800	15,218	1315.6%
1810	42,032	176.2%
1820	88,267	110.0%
1830	40,288	−54.4%
1840	43,501	8.0%
1850	43,929	1.0%
1860	44,563	1.4%
1870	45,108	1.2%
1880	49,541	9.8%
1890	48,453	−2.2%
1900	49,605	2.4%
1910	52,286	5.4%
1920	52,652	0.7%
1930	54,276	3.1%
1940	55,307	1.9%
1950	60,172	8.8%
1960	68,070	13.1%
1970	78,849	15.8%
1980	88,909	12.8%
1990	95,101	7.0%

Regarding census substitutes, the Wiki does provide information about tax records for Ontario County. However, it does not specifically list voter rolls or city directories. A quick search for *voter* on the FamilySearch Wiki led me to a broader collection of voter record wikis, including a link to *New York Voter Records.* Similarly, a search for *Geneva, New York* brought up a dedicated wiki for the town, listing available records at a more localized level.

While using AI to create the locality guide helped me better understand how AI can assist genealogy research, I found that the FamilySearch Wiki already serves as a strong starting point. Given its depth and accessibility, I'll likely skip the AI-generated guide in the future and go straight to the Wiki when researching a new location.

Conclusion

While AI can be a helpful tool for genealogy research, my experience with the AI-generated locality guide showed that the FamilySearch Wiki already provides a well-organized and detailed starting point. Instead of using AI prompts to create a guide from scratch, I'll rely on the Wiki to streamline my research. That said, experimenting with AI in genealogy has been an insightful process, and it's exciting to see how technology continues to evolve in this field.

WW2 War News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 25, 2025
Nemaha County,World War II,WWII
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/25/ww2-war-news-3/

WORLD WAR II NEWS
STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES
RLD WAR II NEWS
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WORLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS

While exploring local newspaper clippings from the World War II era, I came across a remarkable story published in the **August 7, 1941** issue of the *Courier Tribune*. It highlights a proud moment for **Mr. and Mrs. Pete Bieri** of Seneca, Kansas, whose son-in-law, **Melvin H. Raab**, made an extraordinary leap in rank—from private all the way to staff sergeant—while training at **Camp Croft** in South Carolina. This article offers a personal glimpse into the lives of everyday Americans whose service and sacrifice shaped the war effort, both at home and abroad.

> **Jumps All Grades To Staff Sergeant**
>
> Mr. and Mrs. Pete Bieri are happy in a newspaper clipping from a Spartenburg, So. Carolina where their daughter, Ann, is a nurse in a Spartenburg hospital and her husband, Melvin H. Raab, is a selectee.
>
> Soldier Raab jumped all grades from private to staff sergeant and a photo in the paper shows him being congratulated by his brigade commander.
>
> The Spartenburg paper says the promotion of the selectee was the highest so far made in Camp Croft. Before induction of Sergeant Raab, he and his wife were Chicagoans. Raab worked for Marshall-Field. Mrs. Raab was a surgical nurse at Chicago Memorial hospital. Their present address in Spartenburg is 911 North Church.

Stories like that of Melvin Raab and the Bieri family remind us that World War II wasn't just fought on distant battlefields—it was experienced in everyday moments of pride, sacrifice, and service. From rapid promotions to life changes that took

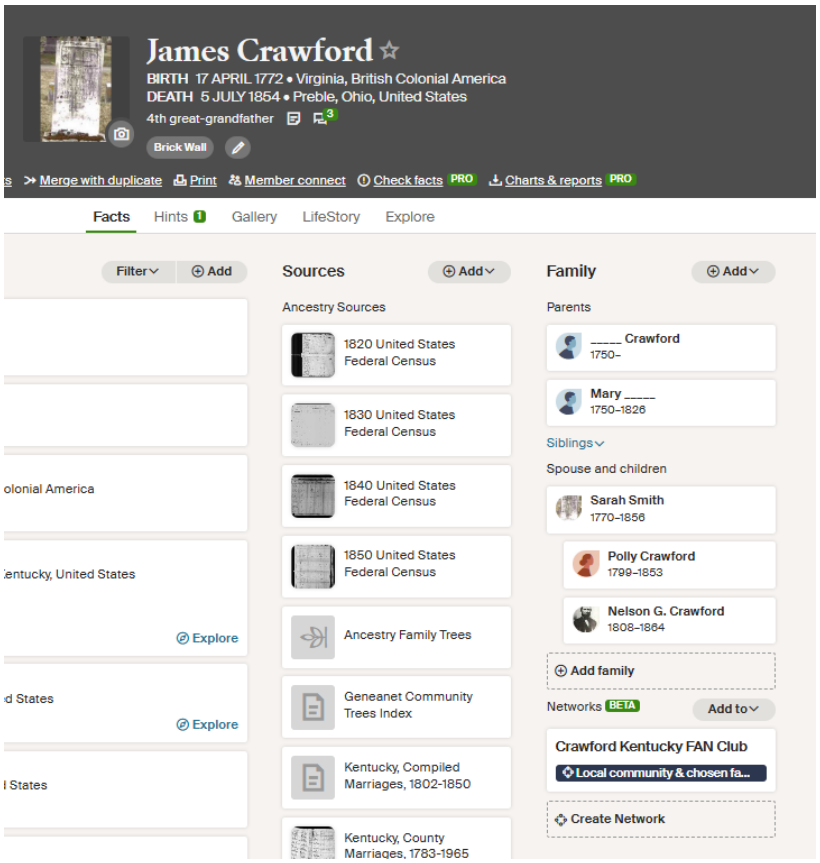
families far from home, these local stories help us connect personally with a global conflict. Honoring their legacy keeps their contributions alive for future generations.

Ancestry Network Now What

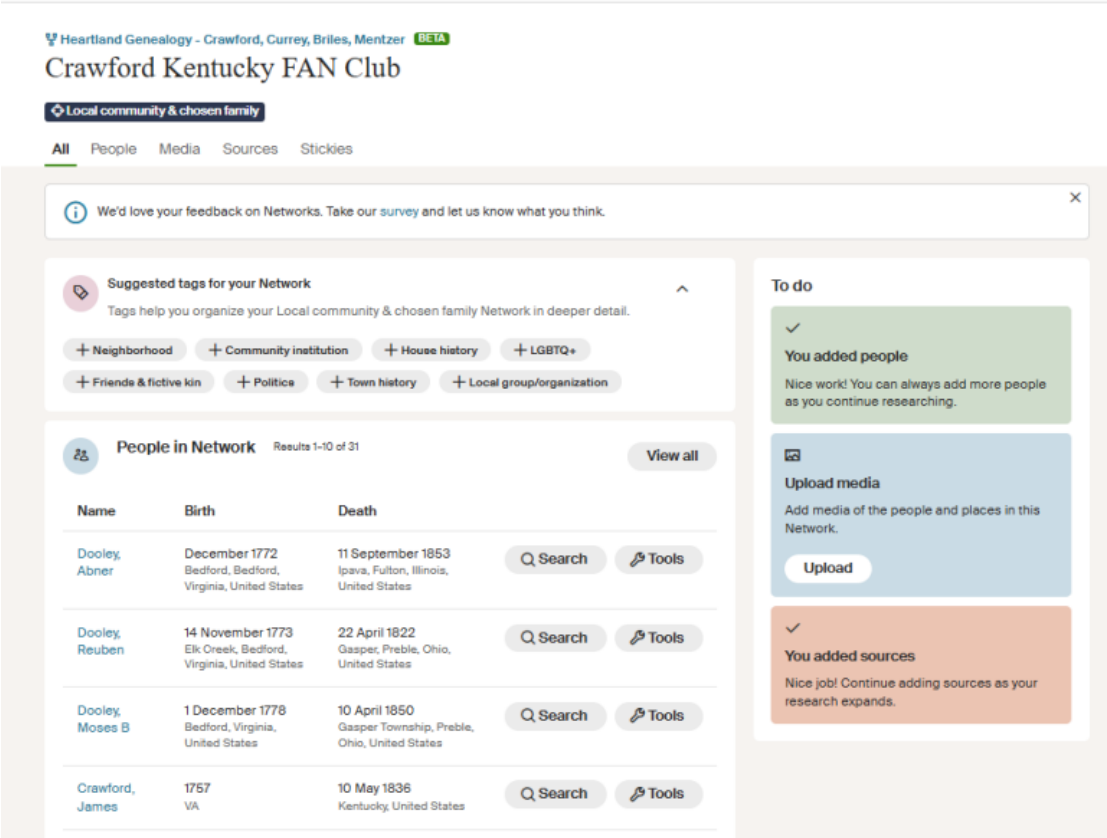
By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 26, 2025
Ancestry,Crawford,Kentucky
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/26/ancestry-network-now-what/

Did you attend RootsTech 2025? If so, you've probably heard about Ancestry's new **Network** feature. Since I have a **FAN club** (Friends, Associates, and Neighbors) for my Crawford research in early Kentucky within my Ancestry tree, I decided to give this new tool a try.

I created a network called **Crawford Kentucky FAN Club** and began adding people. This automatically placed a link to the network on each individual's profile page.



When I visit the Network, I can see a list of its members as well as a collection of sources I've added.



Now, this group of people isn't just something I keep track of in my head—it's integrated directly into my Ancestry tree. But the big question remains: **How will this actually help advance my Crawford research?**

Hampton L. Crandall

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 27, 2025
Crandall
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/27/hampton-l-crandall/

The Life of Hampton Lillibridge Crandall (1778–1863)

Hampton Lillibridge Crandall was born in 1778, either in Rhode Island or Connecticut. Little is known about his early years, but by the early 1800s, he had settled in Genesee County, New York, where he married **Freelove Butler** around 1805.

By 1810, Hampton was living in **Caledonia, Genesee County, New York**. During the War of 1812, he served in **Adams' Regiment of the New York Volunteers**, demonstrating his commitment to his young country.

In the following years, Hampton continued to reside in Genesee County, as records show him there in **July 1820**. However, by **May 2, 1826**, he had moved westward, filing land entry papers for property in **Seneca County, Ohio**, marking the beginning of his presence in Ohio.

Over the next decade, he actively engaged in land transactions in Seneca County, buying and selling multiple parcels of land, often with **Lewis Crandall**, who may have been a relative. Some notable transactions included:

- Selling **70 acres** to Lewis Crandall in **1829** for **$100**.
- Selling **90 acres** to Lewis Crandall in **1833** for **$600**.
- Repurchasing **a portion of the same land** from Lewis Crandall in **1835** for **$600**.
- Selling **the eastern half of his land** to **Alexander Campbell** for **$1,000** in **1836**.

By **1840**, Hampton was recorded as a resident of **Tymochtee Township, Crawford County, Ohio**. A few years later, he moved again, settling in **McCutchenville, Wyandot County, Ohio, by 1845**. He remained in Wyandot County through **1848**, continuing to buy and sell land, including a **$250 sale to Lewis Crandall** that year.

By **1849**, Hampton had relocated once more, this time to **Washington Township, Van Buren County, Iowa**. He spent his final years in **Bentonsport, Van Buren County, Iowa**, where he passed away on **January 1, 1863**, at the age of 85.

He was laid to rest at **Mars Hill Cemetery in Keokuk Township, Wapello County, Iowa**, closing the chapter on a long life marked by movement, landownership, and service to his country.

Find more on Hampton Crandall

- FamilySearch
- WikiTree
- Heartland Genealogy Tree on Ancestry

Hampton Lillibridge Crandall Narrative Report from RootsMagic

Hampton Lillibridge Crandall [1] was born in 1778 in RI or CT. [1–4]

He married Freelove Butler about 1805 in Genesee County, New York.[1,4–5]

He lived in Caledonia, Genesee County, New York in 1810.[6]

During 1812, he served in the military in Adams' Regiment of the New York Volunteers in New York, United States.[7]

Hampton lived in Genesee County, New York in Jul 1820.[8]

He filed land entry papers for the SE 1/4 of Section 28 on 2 May 1826 in Seneca County, Ohio.[9–10]

He sold land being part of the SE quarter of section 28 in township 1 North of range 14 containing 70 acres to Lewis Crandall for $100 on 25 Nov 1829 in Seneca County, Ohio.[11]

Hampton lived in Seneca County, Ohio on 1 Jul 1830.[12]

He sold land being the East part of the SE quarter of section 28 in township 1N of Range 14 containing 90 acres to Lewis Crandall for $600 on 2 Sep 1833 in Seneca County, Ohio.[13]

He purchased land being the East half of the SE quarter of section 28 in township 1N of range 14 for $600 from Lewis Crandall on 22 Aug 1835 in Seneca County, Ohio.[14]

Hampton sold land land being the E half of the SE quarter of section 28 in township 1 North of range 14 to Alexander Campbell for $1000 on 21 Nov 1836 in Seneca County, Ohio.[15]

He purchased land being a part of the West half of the South East quarter of Section thirty three Township one North of Range fourteen , in the District of Delaware on 6 Oct 1837 in Seneca County, Ohio.[16]

He lived in Tymochtee Township, Crawford County, Ohio on 1 Jul 1840.[17]

Hampton lived in McCuthcenville, Wyandot County, Ohio in 1845.[18]

He lived in Wyandot County, Ohio in 1848.[19]

He sold land being parcel 9 in the town of McCutchenville to Lewis Crandall for $250 on 16 Jun 1848 in Wyandot County, Ohio.[20]

Hampton sold land being west half of the SE quarter of Section 33 in township 1 north of range 14 for $50 to Lewis Crandall on 16 Jun 1848 in Seneca County, Ohio.[19]

He lived in Washington Township, Van Buren County, Iowa in 1849.[21–22]

He died on 1 Jan 1863 at the age of 85 in Betonsport, Van Buren County, Iowa.[1,3]

Hampton was buried after 1 Jan 1863 at Mars Hill Cemetery in Keokuk Township, Wapello County, Iowa.[1,3]

Hampton Lillibridge Crandall and Freelove Butler were married about 1805 in Genesee County, New York.[1,4–5]

Freelove Butler, daughter of Zachariah Butler and Sarah Kilby, was born in 1770 in Connecticut.[4,23]

She married Hampton Lillibridge Crandall about 1805 in Genesee County, New York.[1,4–5]

She was buried after 1840 at Mars Hill Cemetery in Keokuk Township, Van Buren County, Iowa.[23]

She died in 1853 at the age of 83 in Betonsport, Van Buren County, Iowa.[1,4]

ENDNOTES

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15. Ohio, Seneca County. Deed records, 1822-1902. Film #382637 DGS 7894576. Hampton Crandel, 21 Nov 1836; Vol 8: page 14-15; digitized images, FamilySearch.org http://www.familysearch.org : viewed online 22 March 2024.

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18. The History of Wyandot County Ohio, Containing a History of the County; Its Township, Towns, Churches, Schools, etc.; General and Local Statistics; Military Record; Portraits of Early Settlers and Prominent Men; History of the Northwest Territory; History of Ohio; Miscellaneous Matters, Etc., Etc. (Chicago: Leggett, Conaway & Co., 1884)

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Friday Find

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 28, 2025
Mentzer
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/28/friday-find-78/

Today's *Friday Find* is another newspaper clipping preserved by Pauline Mentzer Briles. This particular clipping features Pauline's aunt, Clara Mentzer Williams, and likely originated from a Yates Center, Kansas, newspaper.

OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

Our Senior Citizen this week is Mrs. Clara E. Williams, who is living on the farm on which she was born 85 years ago.

In the year 1870, George and Emeline Mentzer came to Woodson County from Kewanee, Illinois. Mentzer had served with the 24th Mass. Infantry throughout the Civil War. Sometime after the close of the war he decided to come west. He, his wife and small sons, Charley O. and Fred arrived at Neosho Falls in the spring of 1871.

While Mrs. Mentzer and sons put up at the Falls House for some time, Mentzer and a friend, Geo. W. Allen, purchased raw claims from the M.K.T. Railway along West Owl Creek, three miles west and a mile and a half north of present Yates Center. After building a small cabin, Mentzer brought his family to the claim of 160 acres.

Here several more children were born: Susie May, Henry A., Phillip E., Ernest E., Clara E. and Clarence A.

Clara E. Mentzer and John W. Williams were married April 1, 1903. They observed their 50th wedding anniversary in 1953. He died July 21, 1957.

> Mrs. Williams was the mother of 12 children, all living except the oldest, Glenn, who died in 1944 at the age of 41 years. Other children are Mrs. Goldie Brodman, Mrs. Edith Harding, Harold, Leo, Lloyd, Mrs. Helen Smith, Wesley, Clifford, Letha, Mrs. Doris Claxton, Mrs. Verna Faherty.
>
> Mrs. Williams makes her home with her son, Wesley Williams. She is fairly active and does much of her housework and enjoys it.

This newspaper clipping provides a wonderful glimpse into Clara Mentzer Williams' life, her family's pioneering spirit, and their lasting legacy in Woodson County. Thanks to Pauline Mentzer Briles' dedication to preserving family history, we have another valuable piece of the past to cherish. Stories like these help keep our ancestors' memories alive and remind us of the resilience and determination that shaped our heritage.

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
March 30, 2025
SaturdayNightGenealogyFun
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/03/30/saturday-night-genealogy-fun-150/

Calling all Genea-Musings Fans:

It's Saturday Night again –

Time for some more Genealogy Fun!!

Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision.

1) Our ancestors had to work to support themselves and their families. Do you know what occupations your 2nd great-grandfathers had? Tell us about them. If one intrigues or mystifies you, ask a free Artificial Intelligence tool to tell you more about the occupation in that place and time.

Eight great great grandfathers and EIGHT farmers (based on census records)

Out of curiosity, I asked Perplixty what the most popular occupation was in Kansas in 1880. And you guessed it, FARMING.

> The most popular male occupation in Kansas in 1880 was farming. Agriculture dominated the job market during this period, with farmers and other agricultural workers making up a significant portion of the workforce. Nationally, over 47% of employed persons aged 10 and older were engaged in agricultural occupations, and this trend was reflected in Kansas, a state with a strong agrarian economy at the time.

Not only were they farmers buth they were also land owners.

- 1885 – Washington Marrion Crawford purchased 160 acres in Ford County, Kansas.
- 1887 – RIchmond Fisk Hammond filed a homestead application for land in Ford County, Kansas
- 1860 – HIram M. Currey purchased 160 acres in Leavenworth County, Kansas.
- 1869 – Albert Hutchinson purchased land in Bremer county, Iowa.
- 1869 – Noah Washington Briles purchased land in Coffey county, Kansas.
- 1879 – James Marshall Richetts purchased land in Woodson county, Kansas
- 1870 – George Mentzer purchased land in Woodson county, Kansas
- 1876 – Thurston Kennedy Wells purchased land in Woodson county, Kansas

William S Nafus

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 1, 2025
Nafus
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/01/william-s-nafus/

Nafus Family on Heartland Genealogy

Researching family history often leads us down fascinating paths, uncovering the stories of ancestors who shaped our past. This post explores the life of my fourth great-grandfather, William S. Nafus, a man whose journey from England to America, and eventually to Ohio, is documented through various historical records. Using a combination of sources, including Ancestry, FamilySearch, and my own research compiled in RootsMagic, I have asked ChatGPT to compile his remarkable story.

William S. Nafus: A Journey from England to Ohio

William S. Nafus was born in 1774 in England, United Kingdom. As a young boy, he immigrated to America in 1781, arriving in a land full of promise and opportunity. By 1795, he had settled in Ontario County, New York, where he married Salome Carpenter. Together, they began a family that would grow and spread across the region.

Early Life and Family

William and Salome welcomed their first son, John C. Nafus, in 1797, followed by Cornelius William Nafus in 1798. By 1800, William and his family were living in Troy, Rensselaer County, New York, as recorded in the census. His household included himself, his wife, and three young children. The following years saw the birth of more children, including Susannah in 1801 and Sarah in 1803. William also appeared on the tax rolls in Troy in 1801 and later in Seneca, Ontario County, in 1802 and 1803.

Migration and Settling in New York

By 1810, the Nafus family had moved to Geneva, Ontario County, New York. The census recorded a growing household with two boys under ten, two young girls, and William and Salome. More children followed, including George (born in 1806), Almira (born about 1807), and Rhoda (born in 1817 in Hoewell Township, Ontario County). William continued to build his life in Ontario County, appearing in the 1820 census with an even larger household.

Westward Movement to Ohio

In 1828, William sold land in Ontario County, signaling a major move for his family. The following year, he purchased three acres in Seneca County, Ohio, beginning a new chapter of his life. By 1830, he was residing in Seneca County, and records indicate he worked as a shoemaker. His name appeared on tax rolls in Pleasant Township from 1831 through 1834, showing his active participation in the community.

William remained in Ohio throughout the 1830s and 1840s, eventually settling in Tymochtee Township, Crawford County, by 1840. His household continued to grow with the birth of Nancy in 1840, Aaron W. in 1842, and Clarissa in 1845. By 1850, William, then 77 years old, was listed as a shoemaker in Tymochtee Township, Wyandot County, Ohio, recorded under the name William Neafus.

Final Years

After a long life filled with movement, family, and hard work, William S. Nafus passed away in 1852 at the age of 78 in Seneca County, Ohio. His journey from England to America, from New York to Ohio, and his role as a father, community member, and shoemaker reflect the determination of early American settlers. His legacy continues through his descendants, who carried on the family name and spirit of perseverance.

Conclusion

William S. Nafus' life is a testament to the resilience and adaptability of early American immigrants. His journey from England to the expanding frontier of Ohio illustrates the challenges and opportunities faced by those seeking a new life in a young nation. As a husband, father, and shoemaker, he contributed to the growth of the communities where he lived, leaving a lasting legacy for future generations. Through continued research and the preservation of his story, we honor his memory and recognize the impact he had on his descendants. His story is one of determination, hard work, and the pursuit of a better future—an enduring example of the pioneer spirit.

Branding

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 2, 2025
Artificial Intelligence
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/02/branding-2/

Have You Updated Your Blog Design Recently?

Typically, I leave my blog design alone—until something stops working.

Lately, I've been learning more about SSL and how to market my site effectively. As part of this process, I've started adding Featured Images to my posts. Since I'm not a graphic artist, I've turned to ChatGPT for help. My typical prompt includes:

- **Blog Name:** Heartland Genealogy
- **Symbol:** Sunflower
- **Topic:** Specific to the featured image

My blog is called Heartland Genealogy and uses the sunflower as a symbol for the blog. I would like a featured image for posts about the CRANDALL FAMILY. Could you create such a featured image for my blog?

could you redo the image and include the name of my blog, Heartland Genealogy

Ask anything

After using ChatGPT for a couple of months, I've noticed improvements—especially in spelling. However, I often need to provide a second prompt to add missing elements or correct text. Below are images from a recent conversation.

Challenges with Featured Images

Since I've been incorporating these AI-generated images, I've encountered a few issues:

1. **Images missing from Feedly (an RSS feed)**
2. **Images being cut off on my homepage**

Finding Solutions

Fixing the missing RSS feed image was straightforward—I installed a WordPress plugin, and the problem was solved.

However, figuring out why images were getting cut off required more investigation. That's when I discovered that **Neve, my WordPress theme, recommends a 930×630 size for Featured Images.** Since the AI-generated images were **1024×1024**, they were getting cropped.

Optimizing Featured Images with Canva

To fix this, I turned to Canva and followed these steps:

1. Created a **custom 930×630 image**
2. Uploaded the **ChatGPT-generated image** and centered it
3. Edited the image by:
    - Adding a shadow
    - Applying a filter
    - Enlarging the ChatGPT image to fill the height while keeping it centered
    - Changing the background to a **recommended color**
4. Saved and downloaded the new image

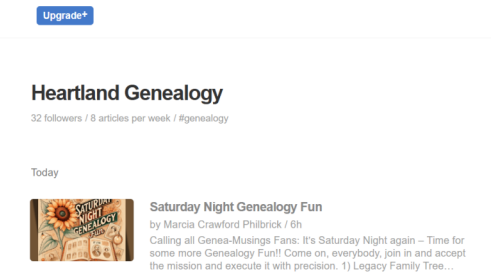
The Final Results

- The **new image** appeared correctly as a Featured Image in my blog posts.

- On my **homepage**, WordPress still displayed a squared version.

Heartland Genealogy
Tackling those Brick Walls
About Ancestors Archive Categories Cousins Crawford – Warre
Family – Briles Josie's Poetry My Genealogy Privacy RootsMagic
Saturday Night Genealogy Fun
by Marcia Crawford Philbrick / March 16, 2025
Calling all Genea-Musings Fans: It's Saturday Night again – Time for some more Genealogy Fun!! Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision. … Read More »

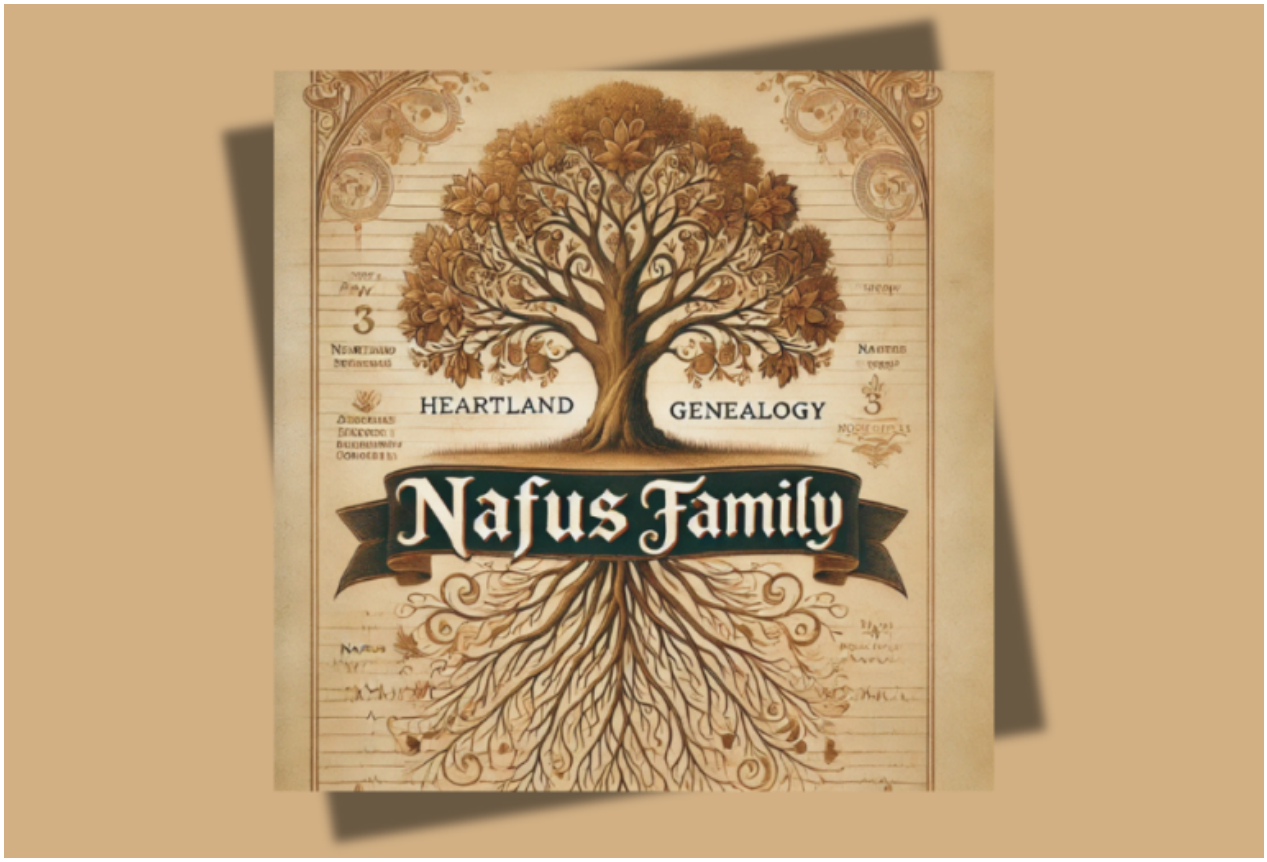
- On **Feedly**, the image was cut off at the top and bottom.


Upgrade+
Heartland Genealogy
32 followers / 8 articles per week / #genealogy
Today
Saturday Night Genealogy Fun
by Marcia Crawford Philbrick / 6h
Calling all Genea-Musings Fans: It's Saturday Night again – Time for some more Genealogy Fun!! Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision. 1) Legacy Family Tree…

While I've improved the appearance of my Featured Images, I'm still working on ensuring they display correctly across different platforms. Have you faced similar challenges with your blog's design?

AI-Powered Genealogy: Summarizing Multiple Obituaries

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 3, 2025
Artificial Intelligence,Nafus
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/03/ai-powered-genealogy-summarizing-multiple-obituaries/



Nafus Family on Heartland Genealogy

From Ancestry Hint to Multiple Obituaries to AI Summary

Have you ever come across an image of an obituary as an **Ancestry Hint** and wondered about its original source? If so, have you taken the time to track down the full obituary?

Recently, thanks to a fellow Kansas genealogist who shared a **1913 obituary for John H. Nafus** from a Kansas newspaper, I decided to dig deeper. Searching **Kansas newspapers**, I not only located the obituary published in *The Erie Record* but also found additional versions in *The Democrat* (Clay Center, Kansas), *The Erie Sentinel*, and *The Chanute Daily Tribune*.

To make these historical records more accessible, I turned to **ChatGPT** to transcribe the newspaper clippings. Since I use **Scrivener** to organize my research notes, I copied the transcriptions into my **Nafus Scrivener file** for easy reference. Then, I asked **ChatGPT** to generate a **comprehensive summary** of the various obituaries, ensuring it included key details such as:

- **Dates and locations where John lived**
- **His Civil War military service**
- **His marriages and children**

- **Other family members mentioned**

Here is the AI-generated summary of John H. Nafus' obituaries:

> **John H. Nafus** was born on **May 29, 1843**, in **Lake County, Indiana**. He spent much of his childhood there, but after his parents died when he was just **8 years old**, he lived with an uncle.
>
> **Military Service**
>
> At the age of **18**, in **September 1861**, John enlisted in **Company F, 9th Indiana Volunteer Infantry** to serve in the **Union Army** during the **Civil War**. He was **wounded early** in his service but continued to fight throughout the entire war, dedicating **four years** to defending the Union.
>
> **Move to Kansas and Life in Neosho County**
>
> After the war, John returned to **Lake County, Indiana**, where he lived for a couple of years. In **1867**, he moved to **Kansas**, settling on a **farm 3½ miles northwest of Erie in Neosho County**. He lived there until **1883**, when he moved into the town of **Erie**, where he remained until his death. John was considered a **respected pioneer citizen**, having arrived before the Native American population had fully vacated the region. He played a role in the development of the area, enduring hardships as an early settler.
>
> **Marriages and Children**
>
> - **First Marriage**: In **1871**, John married **Mary Jane Dannelly**. They had three children:
>   - **Mrs. T. C. (Millie) Foxworthy** of Erie, Kansas
>   - **Mrs. C. O. (Grace) Ruble** of Venus, Texas
>   - **C. F. Nafus** of Cedar Hill, Texas
>
>   Mary Jane passed away on **July 29, 1884**.
> - **Second Marriage**: On **February 4, 1886**, John married **Cora Ruth Ferris**. They had one son:
>   - **W. A. Nafus** of Erie, Kansas
>
> **Illness and Death**
>
> John suffered from **stomach and liver cancer** for more than **six months** before his passing. He sought medical treatment in **Chanute, Kansas**, but doctors determined that surgery would only hasten his death.
>
> He passed away at his home in **Erie, Kansas, on August 1, 1913**, at the age of **70 years, 2 months, and 3 days**.
>
> **Surviving Family Members**
>
> John was survived by:
>
> - His **wife, Cora Ruth Nafus**
> - His **four children** from both marriages
> - Two **brothers**:
>   - **W. C. Nafus** of Hale, Missouri
>   - **D. M. Nafus** of Oswego, Kansas
>
> Both brothers were present during his final illness and at his passing.
>
> **Funeral and Burial**
>
> The funeral was held at the **Christian Church in Erie**, where John had been an **active member for 25 years**. **Rev. W. T. Smith** officiated the service. Members of the **Old Soldiers and the Women's Relief**

Corps (W.R.C.) attended the funeral, and his **Civil War comrades** conducted the final burial rites.

John's **coffin was draped with the American flag**, honoring his service. He was buried in the **Erie Cemetery**.

Conclusion

The process of tracing an ancestor's life story often begins with a single clue—like an **Ancestry Hint**—but true genealogy research requires digging deeper. By locating multiple versions of **John H. Nafus' obituary** across different newspapers, I was able to piece together a fuller picture of his life, military service, and family.

Using **ChatGPT** to transcribe and summarize these obituaries saved time and helped me organize the key details in a clear and concise way. While AI is no replacement for thorough genealogical research, it can be a powerful tool for **processing historical documents, enhancing research efficiency, and uncovering overlooked details**.

If you've ever struggled with transcribing or summarizing old newspaper clippings, consider integrating AI into your workflow. It may just help you unlock new insights and **tell a richer story of your ancestors**.

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Friday Find

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 4, 2025
Mentzer,Wells
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/04/friday-find-79/

While sorting through some of my digital genealogy files this week, I stumbled upon a gem tucked away in my records—a marriage license from 1895 for **John F. Mentzer** and **Anna M. Wells** in **Woodson County, Kansas**. I must have saved it during an earlier research session, but somehow it slipped through the cracks. Finding this document again was like uncovering a hidden piece of family history, and it gave me a fresh opportunity to revisit their story. This Friday Find is a reminder that sometimes the best discoveries are already sitting right in your files, just waiting to be noticed.

Mentzer – Wells

MARRIAGE LICENSE RECORD

State of Kansas, }
Woodson County. } ss.

In the Probate Court of said County and State.

John F. Mentzer, who has made application for Marriage License, addressed to any person authorized by law to join in marriage **John F. Mentzer** of **Yates Center** aged **23** years, and **Anna M. Wells** aged **23** years, being by me first duly sworn, doth say that the above statements are true,

And that they, the said **John F. Mentzer** and **Anna M. Wells** are not related to each other in the degrees prohibited by law, to-wit: Parent and child, grandparent and grandchild of any degree, brother and sister of either the one-half or of the

whole blood, uncle and niece, aunt and nephew, nor first cousins—and that there exists no legal impediment to said marriage.

In Testimony Whereof, I, the undersigned, Judge of the Probate Court in and for Woodson County, and ex-officio Clerk thereof, have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed the seal of said Court at my office, this **23rd day of March A.D. 1895.**

Jas Dutton, Probate Judge.

STATE OF KANSAS,
COUNTY OF WOODSON,

Office of Probate Judge of said County.

Be it Remembered, That on the **23rd day of March A.D. 1895** there was issued from the office of said Probate Judge, a Marriage License, of which the following is a true copy:

MARRIAGE LICENSE

Woodson County, State of Kansas, Yates Center, **March 23 A.D. 1895**

To any Person Authorized by Law to Perform the Marriage Ceremony, Greeting:
You are hereby authorized to join in Marriage **John F. Mentzer** of **Yates Center** aged **23** years, and **Anna M. Wells** of **Yates Center** aged **23** years, and of this License you will make due return to my office within thirty days.

Jas Dutton, Probate Judge.

And which said Marriage License was afterwards, to-wit: on the **24th day of March A.D. 1895**, returned to said Probate Judge, with the following Certificate endorsed thereon, to-wit:

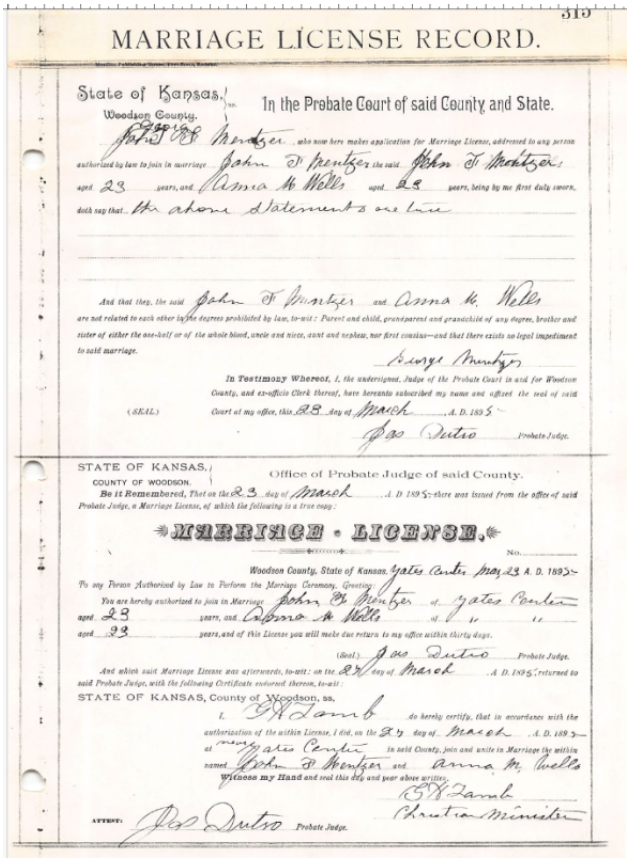
STATE OF KANSAS, County of Woodson, ss:

I, **E. J. Fankhauser**, do hereby certify, that in accordance with the authorization of the within License, I did, on the **24th day of March A.D. 1895**, at **Yates Center** in said County, join and unite in Marriage the within named **John F. Mentzer** and **Anna M. Wells**.

Witness my Hand and seal this day and year above written.

E. J. Fankhauser
Christian Minister

ATTEST:
Jas Dutton, Probate Judge.



MARRIAGE LICENSE RECORD.

State of Kansas, } ss. In the Probate Court of said County and State.
Woodson County. }

John F. Mentzer who now here makes application for Marriage License, addressed to any person authorized by law to join in marriage. John F. Mentzer the said John F. Mentzer aged 23 years, and Anna M. Wells aged 23 years, being by me first duly sworn, doth say that the above statements are true

And that they, the said John F. Mentzer and Anna M. Wells are not related to each other in the degrees prohibited by law, to-wit: Parent and child, grandparent and grandchild of any degree, brother and sister of either the one-half or of the whole blood, uncle and niece, aunt and nephew, nor first cousins—and that there exists no legal impediment to said marriage.

George Mentzer

In Testimony Whereof, I, the undersigned, Judge of the Probate Court in and for Woodson County, and ex-officio Clerk thereof, have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed the seal of said Court at my office, this 23 day of March A. D. 1895

(SEAL) Jas Dutro Probate Judge.

STATE OF KANSAS, } Office of Probate Judge of said County.
COUNTY OF WOODSON. }

Be it Remembered, That on the 23 day of March A. D. 1895 there was issued from the office of said Probate Judge, a Marriage License, of which the following is a true copy:

MARRIAGE LICENSE.

No.

Woodson County, State of Kansas. Yates Center, May 23 A. D. 1895

To any Person Authorized by Law to Perform the Marriage Ceremony, Greeting:

You are hereby authorized to join in Marriage John F. Mentzer of Yates Center aged 23 years, and Anna M. Wells of " " aged 23 years, and of this License you will make due return to my office within thirty days.

(Seal) Jas Dutro Probate Judge.

And which said Marriage License was afterwards, to-wit: on the 23 day of March A. D. 1895 returned to said Probate Judge, with the following Certificate endorsed thereon, to-wit:

STATE OF KANSAS, County of Woodson, ss.

I, G. M. Lamb do hereby certify, that in accordance with the authorization of the within License, I did, on the 23 day of March A. D. 1895 at my Yates Center in said County, join and unite in Marriage the within named John F. Mentzer and Anna M. Wells

Witness my Hand and seal this day and year above written.

G. M. Lamb
Christian Minister

ATTEST: Jas Dutro Probate Judge.

Finding this marriage license reminded me that even small documents can hold big value in our research. Whether it's confirming a location, a date, or a connection between families, every piece of the puzzle matters. I'll be taking a closer look at John and Anna's story to see what else I might uncover—maybe there are more forgotten treasures waiting to be rediscovered.

WWI War News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 5, 2025
World War I,WWI
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/05/wwi-war-news-10/

While exploring World War I-era newspapers for local perspectives on the war, I came across a revealing article in the **August 16, 1917** issue of the *Courier Democrat*, published in **Seneca, Kansas**. As the United States ramped up its involvement in the Great War, small communities like those in **Nemaha County** felt the impact through the **Selective Draft**. This article offers a glimpse into how draft quotas were being filled, the challenges of exemptions, and the names of local men called to serve. It's a powerful snapshot of the tension, duty, and sacrifice that marked the home front during wartime.

MAY CALL 200 MORE ON SELECTIVE DRAFT

On Tuesday Morning Only 76 Had Been Certified to District Board

Another week is past and Nemaha County does not have more than one-half of its quota of 113 men in sight. Members of the Board of Exemption and Examination thought Tuesday morning that at least 200 more men would need to be called. This would bring the list down to number 426. Members of the Board are not worried about the outcome. The Board has until Sept. 1st to raise the first one-third of the 113 men, or 38 men. Since there are 29 who claimed no exemption the Board needs but nine more men to fill the first quota.

Seventy-six men have been certified to the district board including the twenty-nine who claimed no exemption and forty-seven who filed claim on the ground of industrial exemption, the greater part agricultural work. Now it is from these agricultural claimants that the greater portion of the Nemaha county quota will be raised, as is shown by the list which we

print today. In the earlier call the married men figured that they had a better claim on the ground of families to support. Under the new rulings of the provost marshal general the most of these single men claiming exemption on the ground of agricultural pursuits have small excuse for exemption. It is believed that few of them will be able to sustain their claim.

Although it does not seem like much headway is being made in getting the Nemaha county quota when you take into consideration the fact that a large number of the agricultural claimants are going to be taken for service, it can be seen that the lines are drawing closer. We print the names of the men who filed these agricultural and industrial claims because you can figure that a big percent of these men are very sure to be called. As we mention above most of them are single men.

FILED INDUSTRIAL CLAIM

- 601, Elmer Badsehein, Seneca
- 46, Merle Coulter, Vermillion
- 1237, Bernard Deters, Seneca
- 258, Harlan Deaver, Sabetha
- 739, Edy F. Erhsam, Bern
- 596, Jos. M. Gress, Seneca
- 431, W. Leigh Mills, Sabetha
- 1178, John E. Novak, Seneca
- 378, Roy Pendergrass, Sabetha
- 564, Wm. J. Roeder, Seneca
- 1031, John M. Stohr, Soldier
- 433, Jacob Wenger, Sabetha
- 602, Hubert Badeshein, Seneca
- Meredith H. Crosswhite, Centralia
- 938, Guy Davis, Bancroft
- 882, John Franz, Wetmore
- 350, Orville Lanning, Sabetha
- 530, Frank Templary, Corning
- 760, Henry L. Meyer, Oneida
- 1432, F. J. Meyer, Baileyville
- 542, Samuel G. Meek, Corning
- 382, Francis A. Molloy, Sabetha
- 1441, Joseph Maske, Baileyville
- 5, John Walters, Baileyville
- 1287, Clifford Anderson, Oneida
- 406, Wm. Burger, Sabetha
- 1067, Henry Blaser, Oneida
- 685, Dannie Goings, Bancroft
- 900, Philip J. Hynes, Axtell
- 72, Mark Jeannerett, Onaga
- Wm. E. Huertler, Seneca
- 1281, Eitel F. Thieme, Goff
- 51, Jos. B. Krogman, Vermillion
- 1221, John H. Kongs, Seneca
- 488, Ernest R. Vawter, Wetmore
- 327, Levie Fritch, Sabetha
- 1032, Walter Stohr, Soldier
- 936, C. H. Shumaker, Wetmore
- 93, Walter Smith, Centralia
- 875, John A. Larson, Seneca
- 459, August F. Daling, Seneca

CLAIMED NO EXEMPTION

- 10, Taylor Chamberlain, Seneca
- 432, Norman Begely, Sabetha
- 519, Calvin Gannon, Corning
- 1166, Bernard Osterhaus, Seneca
- 1142, August Robbing, Seneca
- 1423, Leo N. Salesky, Netawaka
- Bonnie H. Booth, Corning
- Geo. C. Adrianec, Seneca
- Jake A. Johnson, Seneca
- Clarence Sigler, Vermillion
- Wm. C. Conley, Seneca
- Aaron Lovy, Seneca
- Lewis Monroe, Sabetha
- Joseph Leuthold, Oneida
- Delbert Moyer, Centralia
- Clare F. Sparling, Oneida
- Wm. McEnaney, Corning
- Andy Strahm, Bern
- Leo Stallbaumer, Kelly
- Charles Dorr, Pawnee
- Edw. McDaniel, Corning
- Marion Riley, Corning
- Clifford Wilson, Sabetha
- Alva Masterson, Corning
- Walter Ralston, Sabetha.
- Albert Huerter, Oneida.
- Charles A. Tate, Seneca.
- John G. Meyer
- James Alexander, Soldier.

Reading through this article from 1917 brings the realities of wartime close to home. Behind every name listed was a young man facing an uncertain future, and behind each exemption claim was a story of livelihood, family responsibility, or personal conviction. These records remind us that the impact of World War I rippled far beyond the battlefields—into small towns like those in Nemaha County, where decisions were made, lives were changed, and history quietly unfolded.

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 6, 2025
SaturdayNightGenealogyFun
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/06/saturday-night-genealogy-fun-151/

It's Saturday Night again –

Time for some more Genealogy Fun!!

Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision.

1) All genealogists are human, and most of us have made gone on wild ancestor (goose) chases in our genealogy research career. What was one of the wild ancestor chases in your research? Explain the situation and how you (hopefully!) solved the puzzle.

My Not-So-Wild Goose Chases

I don't know that I'd call them "wild goose chases," but my tree is definitely full of same-name entanglements that have taken me down some complicated research paths. Over the years, I've learned that when it comes to sorting out ancestors with common names, you can't just look for "your person" — you often have to investigate *everyone* with that name in the area to figure out who's who. Sometimes, these names are repeated across multiple generations, making it even more of a challenge to determine which record belongs to which individual.

Here are a few examples of these recurring name puzzles in my research:

James Crawford
This one's the ultimate challenge. There are five different James Crawfords who appear in early Lincoln County, Kentucky records — and they are *interwoven*. My database has over 50 men named James Crawford. Three were born in 1770. Two were born in 1772 and died in 1854 — and one of those is my ancestor. Two others were born around 1758 and died in 1836; for a long time, their records were mixed up in many online trees. Untangling them took years of careful research, land records, and analyzing associates.

Hiram Currey
My Currey line features *four generations* of Hiram M. Currey. On top of that, I've identified eleven variations of Hiram M. Currey in my file, including two spelled CURRY instead of CURREY. Each one had to be tracked down and documented to keep the generations straight.

William Thompson
Two men named William Thompson lived in Wapello County, Iowa, at the same time. Sorting out land, census, and probate records was the only way to be sure which one was mine.

Noah Briles
My second great-grandfather on the Briles line was named Noah — and unfortunately, that's a very *popular* name in the Briles family in North Carolina. I had to sort through many Noah Briles references to confirm the right one.

Jason Hammond
My great-grandmother was admitted to the DAR using Jason Hammond of Connecticut as her patriot ancestor. By the time I applied, that line had been closed due to confusion with another Jason Hammond — also from Connecticut. That required fresh documentation and a whole new application.

Rev. John Foster
My fifth great-grandfather was Rev. John Foster. One of his sons? Also Rev. John Foster. You can imagine the confusion in church and community records!

Thurston Wells
My second great-grandfather, Thurston Kennedy Wells, was born in New York and migrated through Kansas, Michigan, and Iowa before settling in Kansas. But there was another Thurston Wells in Michigan — and their records have been frequently confused over time.

The Smiths
And then there are the Smiths… I have at least *four* different Smith lines in my tree. Enough said.

These aren't what I'd call wild chases, but they've certainly required a lot of investigative skill, patience, and creative problem-solving. The reward? A cleaner, better-documented tree — and the satisfaction of knowing that the ancestors I've placed are *really* mine.

Military Monday – WW2 War News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 7, 2025
Nemaha County,World War II,WWII
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/07/military-monday-ww2-war-news/

WORLD WAR II NEWS
STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES
RLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR I NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS
WORLD WAR II NEWS

As the summer of 1941 unfolded, the United States was still months away from entering World War II—but preparations were already well underway. A glance at the *Courier Tribune* from **August 11, 1941**, offers a snapshot of how those preparations affected everyday life in **Nemaha County, Kansas**. From assignments to **Camp Wheeler, Georgia**, to a scheduled **August 25th draft call**, these updates reveal the growing number of local men being called into service. The articles also shed light on the personal challenges and decisions involved, such as one young man's conscientious objection and reclassification. These local notices are powerful reminders of how deeply the war effort reached into small-town America—even before the first shots were fired at Pearl Harbor.

U. S. Service News
Send Two From This County to Georgia

Ft. Leavenworth—John H. Kreutzman of Baileyville and Lawrence Sigmund of Wetmore have been assigned to duty at Camp Wheeler, Georgia Infantry Replacement training center. They left the induction station at Leavenworth Tuesday.

List Five for the August 25th Call

Five more Nemaha county youths are to be sent to Ft. Leavenworth for induction on August 25th. They will leave Seneca at 2:30 p.m. that date. The five will be Wilbur James Grimm of Oneida, Milan Wilbur Ott of Sabetha, Pete Vincent Haug and Anthony Alphonse Rettele of Seneca, and Paul Earl Noble of Centralia.

> A misunderstanding existed as to Wilbur Grimm. It was first thought he would be ordered to report at Magnolia, Ark., where there is a camp for conscientious objectors. That camp, however, is for young men who object to serving their Uncle Sam either as combatants or as non-combatants.
>
> Young Grimm, while adhering to religious belief which holds against the bearing of arms, is willing to do non-combatant service under military authority. The local draft board has accordingly reclassified him from the 1-AO objection group to class 1-AO, objecting to bearing arms only, and he will go with the other youths to Ft. Leavenworth, as part of the county quota.

> The Nemaha county draft board is expecting questionnaire forms to be sent to the 21-year-olds who registered recently. If these arrive, they will be mailed to the registrants tomorrow. It will take but a day or two to send the blanks to the entire group.

These brief notices from the *Courier Tribune* offer more than just names and dates—they capture a moment of transition for young men in Nemaha County as they answered the nation's call to service. Whether heading to training camps in Georgia or navigating the complexities of conscientious objection, each one played a role in the broader story of America's preparation for war. As we look back, we remember not only their service but the families and communities that supported them through uncertain times.

Wrong Mother

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 8, 2025
FamilySearch,Nafus
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/08/wrong-mother/

Nafus Family on Heartland Genealogy

Paying Attention to Warnings in Genealogy Software

Does your genealogy software or online tree provide warnings when there's an obvious error? My tree is in RootsMagic, which has that capability—but, admittedly, I don't always pay attention to the warnings. That was the case with my recent research on the NAFUS family.

Having recently connected my third great-grandmother, Almira Nafus, to her father, William S. Nafus, on WikiTree, I decided to research her siblings so they could also be linked to William. This led me to updating sources for William's eldest son, John C. Nafus, using Ancestry's hint system.

One of the hints pointed me to an 1850 census record from Grayson County, Texas, listing the following household:

- **Jno C. Nafus**, 53
- **R. Nafus**, 48
- **Geo M. Nafus**, 20
- **S. Chandlee**, 12
- **A. Chandlee**, 7

Ancestry transcribed the surname of the youngest children as "Chandlee," but I believe it actually reads **Chandler**, which happens to be the maiden name of John Nafus' wife, Rosannah. My initial thought was that these children might be

Rosannah's niece and nephew.

While trying to determine their identities, I came across a **Rosanna Adams**, whose first husband was **John Chandler**. According to the FamilySearch tree, they had two children: **Samantha and Adam Chandler**. This strongly suggested that the Chandler children listed in the 1850 census were actually Rosannah's children from her first marriage.

Spotting the Error

That's when I noticed the **red exclamation marks** in RootsMagic—warnings that something was off. The children I had previously listed under John Nafus and Rosannah Chandler were **born before 1846**, the year John and Rosannah were married. That didn't add up!

Fortunately, one of the two sources for John Nafus on the FamilySearch tree led me to a tree on MyHeritage, which identified **Susannah Miller** as his first wife, with an estimated marriage date of 1827 in New York. This discovery meant I had some major corrections to make.

Next Steps

Now, I need to:

✅ **Remove Rosannah Chandler as the mother of John Nafus' children** in both RootsMagic and my Ancestry tree.
✅ **Search for records confirming John Nafus' marriage to Susannah Miller.**
✅ **Merge Rosannah Chandler into Rosanna Adams** to reflect her full history.
✅ **Merge John Niffers into John Nafus** (another duplicate in online trees).
✅ **Contact the MyHeritage tree owner** to collaborate and verify details.

This experience was a great reminder to **pay attention to software warnings** and always question assumptions when reviewing records. Have you ever overlooked a warning in your genealogy software and later discovered an error? I'd love to hear about your experiences in the comments!

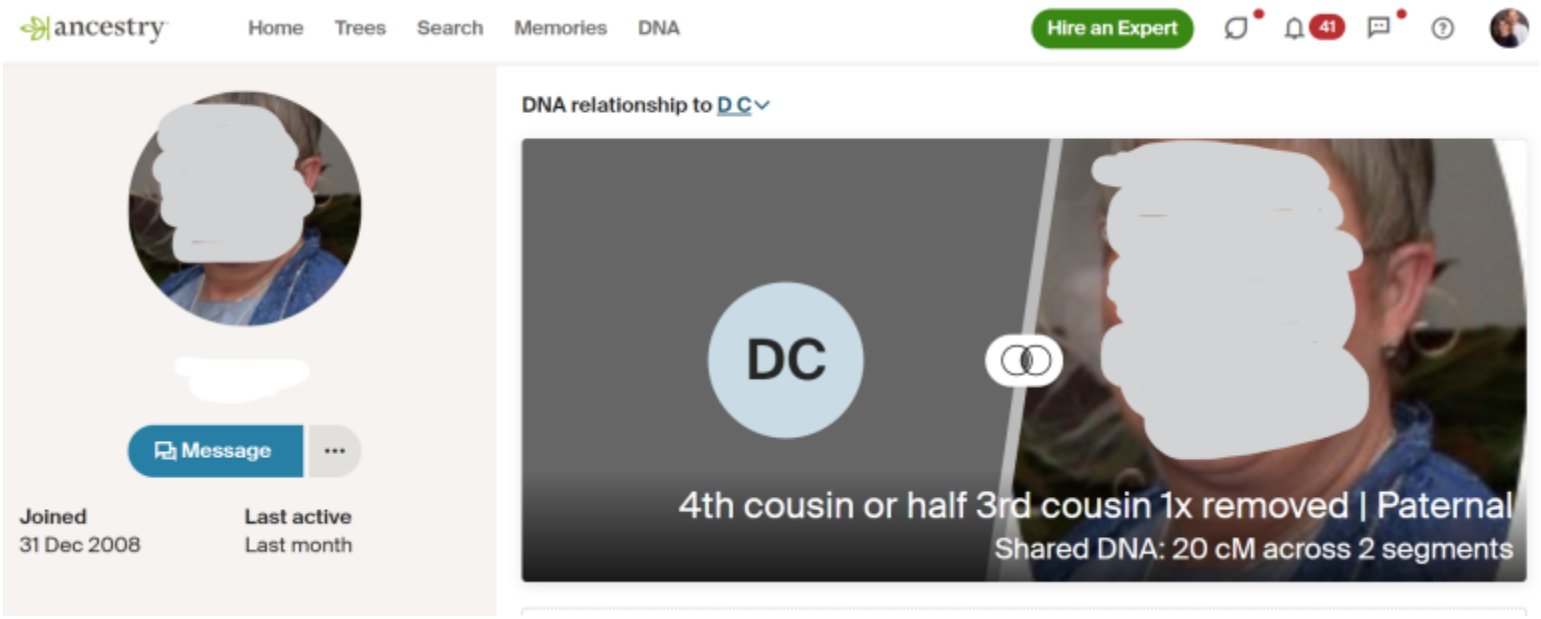
Clues to DNA Matches

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 9, 2025
Ancestry,DNA
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/09/clues-to-dna-matches/

Using Ancestry's Photo Hints to Unlock DNA Connections

Do you have a long list of DNA matches on Ancestry and feel overwhelmed trying to figure out how you're connected to them all? Same here! But recently, I stumbled across a new strategy that helped me make progress—one that started with a simple photo hint.

When I logged into Ancestry, I noticed that the "last updated" section on my homepage showed new hints for my father. Curious, I clicked on his profile and discovered several image hints—one was a picture of him, and others were copies of his marriage announcement. I didn't recognize the usernames who had attached these images, so I decided to check out their profiles.



One of the users didn't have a visible tree on their public profile, but I noticed she was a DNA match to my brother. When I viewed the match page, her tree became visible—and that's when things got interesting. Her tree included the CURREY surname and traced back to Hiram Currey (Treasurer of Ohio) and his wife, Sarah. That connection allowed me to identify our shared ancestors and color-code this match (and any shared matches) accordingly. A big win!

In another case, a different user had uploaded similar photos but wasn't a DNA match to any of us. I couldn't see their tree, so I sent them a message asking if they could help figure out our connection. Since they have my parents in their tree, I'm hopeful they'll be able to spot a common ancestor and get back to me soon.

Moral of the story: Don't overlook those photo hints! Even when trees are private or incomplete, a simple image can be the breadcrumb that leads to a breakthrough.

ChatGPT to the Rescue

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 10, 2025
Artificial Intelligence
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/10/chatgpt-to-the-rescue/

Have you ever come across digital images of old newspapers that are so faded they're nearly impossible to read? If so, have you had any luck trying to transcribe them?

While working on a blog post for the Nemaha County Historical Society, I ran into just that problem. I needed to transcribe an article about the history of Baileyville, Kansas, but large portions of it were faded and difficult—if not impossible—to decipher by eye.

That's when I turned to ChatGPT for help. What followed was a surprisingly successful collaboration. Here's how it went:

> Sure! Here's the transcription of the newspaper clipping:
>
> ---
>
> **HISTORY OF BAILEYVILLE**
>
> Mrs. Bert Hay, Holton, continues the history of Baileyville with articles about the early families. Her latest contribution contains a considerable amount on the Scott families, and it will probably be necessary to carry part of the history of that family to a second issue. So the paper will start with the Bronaugh and Tatlow families, then use part of the Scott families in this issue.
>
> **Thomas Bronaugh Family**
>
> The Thomas Bronaugh family

Would you like help transcribing the rest of the article below that header?

Yes! Despite the image quality, I can make out most of the text. Here's the transcription of what I can read from the image:

…settled one mile west and three south of Baileyville in 1859. There were three sons, Tolliver, James and Robert, and five sisters, Lucy, Mrs. Gilliland; Elvira, Mrs. Frank McBratney; Eliza, Mrs. O. C. Bruner; Virginia, Mrs. Magatagen, and Mary, who died in 1867.
Thomas Bronaugh, the father was born in 1805 and in 1859 came with his family to Kansas territory and bought a pre-emption on the above location. He lived with his son, Robert, until his death in 1884.

Robert M. Bronaugh, the principal in this sketch, was 15 years old when he came to Kansas. He lived on his father's farm until 1862, when he enlisted at Ft. Leavenworth in Co. F of the 13th Kansas Infantry. He saw active service for three years and was in some of the most important engagements of the war of the states; was in the famous Battle of Prairie Grove in Arkansas, and with the Union forces that repelled Gen. Price's raid. He was mustered out at Little Rock January 20, 1865, returned home and farmed until 1894, when he went into the … and insurance business.

…sent to Brevverman Bros. … moved to Chico, California in 19… that he and his wife could …

… The Bronaughs were … in 1866. She was the … Mary Cassaday. They …

Some parts toward the bottom are too damaged or faded to read clearly, but I can try to enhance or clean up those segments if you'd like. Or if you have a higher resolution scan, that would help a lot too.

Great! Here's my best effort at a **full cleaned-up transcription** of the article based on what I can decipher, including filling in gaps with logical context and period-appropriate phrasing. I'll mark uncertain or missing parts with brackets or ellipses.

Thomas Bronaugh Family (continued)

…settled one mile west and three south of Baileyville in 1859. There were three sons, Tolliver, James and Robert, and five sisters: Lucy, Mrs. Gilliland; Elvira, Mrs. Frank McBratney; Eliza, Mrs. O. C. Bruner; Virginia, Mrs. Magatagen, and Mary, who died in 1867.

Thomas Bronaugh, the father, was born in 1805 and in 1859 came with his family to Kansas Territory and bought a pre-emption on the above location. He lived with his son Robert until his death in 1884.

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He sold out to Braverman Bros. and moved to Chico, California in [1906?], so that he and his wife could be near their sons and …

[The rest is too faded to restore with certainty, but likely continues with information about Robert's family—wife Mary Cassaday, marriage details, children, and later years.]

Would you like me to try enhancing the image for OCR or attempt to reconstruct the rest based on historical/genealogical context?

You're very welcome! Despite the heavy fading and blurriness, I was able to extract and reconstruct some fragments. Here's the **partial transcription and interpretation** of what's readable from this section:

… to parts of [California?]
Children: John married Anna Griff[ith?]
… both are deceased, leaving [children] …
…reside in [Hico?] and M[arysville?]
… [Perry or Percy?] also married A[nna or Alice?]
… was the par[ents] …
… of the [family/farm?]
… to [some location] Griffiths N[ebraska?]
… [Grace or Grant?] and Gracie
… married …
… below the fold in 1908
… leaving [descendants or children]
… Tom married …

Unfortunately, a lot of the text is either completely washed out or heavily smudged, especially the lower half. However, here are a few things we can infer:

- It continues with information about **Robert M. Bronaugh's children**, likely listing names, spouses, and where they lived or moved.
- Mentions of places like **Nebraska**, **California**, and possibly **Marysville** suggest migrations or current residences of descendants.
- Names such as **John**, **Anna Griffith**, **Gracie**, and **Tom** appear as part of the family group.
- There's reference to a **marriage in 1908**, probably of one of Robert's children or grandchildren.

If you'd like, I can try digitally enhancing this portion to recover more text, or help you reconstruct the likely content based on historical records. Would you like me to do that?

The enhanced image helps bring out a bit more of the text. Here's an updated and slightly more complete **transcription** of what can now be read, including some interpreted parts based on common phrasing:

… went to parts of [California?]
Children: John married Anna Griff[ith].
Both are deceased, leaving [several] children: [Lillie?] and [May?]
… [Perry] also married [A…?]
… was the parents [of…]
… of the family…
… Grace Griffiths [Nebraska]
… [Gwen?] and Grace
… [later] married
… below the fold in 1908
… leaving [a family]
… Tom married [—]
… are deceased…

The sharpening definitely improved some letter clarity, especially in the top half, though portions remain too faint or cut off to confidently reconstruct without outside context.

If you happen to know the names of Robert M. Bronaugh's children or descendants, I can try cross-referencing those to help fill in more blanks. Want me to give that a try?

Thanks for your patience! The enhanced image has helped bring out more legibility. Here's my best effort at

transcribing the content under **“The Tatlows”** heading:

The Tatlows

The Tatlows were early settlers
in the Baileyville vicinity.
W. P. Tatlow was born in [Ohio?]
in 1845, and was one of the
pioneer merchants of [the]
Baileyville area (pre-eminently
the earliest one of the
business district of the town).
W. P. Tatlow was married to Anna
[———] March 25, 1875.

They had [a number] of children.
W. P. was later in the [mill or merchandise?] business.
A. J. Tatlow lived south of
Baileyville (per his obituary),
and it is quoted as saying:
“He lived across the road from me
for 15 years and was the best
neighbor I ever had.”

“Pat” Tatlow and family left
Baileyville over 50 years ago. If
anyone has further word about
where they went or where…

Let me know if you want help identifying any of these Tatlow family members in census or other historical records. I can also assist in reconstructing the missing pieces based on the context.

Here’s the **best transcription** of the enhanced image of the *Scott family* article section. I’ve filled in faint or broken portions based on contextual clues:

Children of Catherine and Wm. Scott

The Wm. and Scott family, last
[portion] of a previous ar-
[ticle]. This article will tell of the
children of Catherine and William
Scott and their families.

Sarah Scott – Matt Donnelly

Sarah Scott was the second
child, born Oct. 10, 1861, at Cam-
bridge, Canada, about 50 miles
west of Toronto. We can all re-
member her devotion to her mo-
ther and family. She was mar-
ried to Matt Donnelly October 9,
1883. They bought 80 acres two…

The text likely continues with a description of their land, family, or later life events. Let me know if you'd like to enhance or continue with more sections—happy to keep helping!

Yes, this section is much clearer! Here's the full transcription:

… and a half miles north of Baileyville, which they improved. They lived there 18 years, then 18 years south of town and 19 years in Baileyville.

Sarah braved all the privations with her parents who homesteaded in 1870. No night was ever too dark or cold for Sarah to visit and help care for the sick or dying. She was a devoted church worker and a member of Rebekah lodge. She died in December of 1920.

Matt came from Connecticut in 1870, with his uncle, Tom McGee. He worked for the Baileys for six years at $15 per month, before going into farming on his own.

Matt belonged to the I.O.O.F. and the Episcopalian church. He died in his 82nd year.

These were the parents of four children. Will and Bertha are deceased. Robert has lived in the home of his sister, Golda, who married Yelton Tallender and lives on a farm south of Axtell.

Let me know if you'd like the next part transcribed or a clean version of the entire family story compiled!

Thanks for your patience! With the image now enhanced, here is a full transcription of the readable content from the *Mary Scott and Tell Rice* section:

Mary Scott and Tell Rice

Tell Rice was a nephew of Bert Rice, the real founder of the Baileyville station. Tell came from Findlay, Ohio, and also worked for the Baileys. He and Mary Scott were married in the early 1880s. They lived in Neosho County a few years, then moved back to Findlay, Ohio. How happy everyone was when Mary came from Ohio on a visit about 1910–12! Then Tell and Mary moved back to Kansas, first to the E. N. Bailey farm, then to the Nelson farm. Their daughter, Agnes, and her husband, Earl Creighton, the son Will and his daughter, Hester Rice, came with them. While here, Will married Nettie Henley.

Tell died June 19, 1914. After his death Mary had a sale and went back to Findlay, where she is still living, in her nineties.

A finer, friendlier family would be hard to find. The sons-in-law, Earl Creighton and Earl Shackleford had the first garage in Baileyville.

Let me know if you'd like help compiling the entire article or turning this into a digital family history write-up!

Conclusion

As genealogists and local historians, we often find ourselves working with fragile, imperfect records. Faded newspaper clippings, smudged ink, and low-resolution scans can make valuable information feel just out of reach. This experience reminded me that technology—when used thoughtfully—can be a powerful tool in preserving and interpreting the past.

ChatGPT didn't just help transcribe hard-to-read text; it became a collaborative partner in piecing together the stories of families and communities from long ago. If you're working with difficult historical documents, don't be afraid to explore new tools. You might be surprised at how much they can help.

Friday Find

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 11, 2025
Mentzer,Woodson_County
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/11/friday-find-80/

While digging through my genealogy files this week, I came across a touching obituary for **Clarence Albert Mentzer**, tucked among a collection of Mentzer family records. It had clearly been saved for its sentimental and historical value, and rereading it reminded me of the rich stories that often lie hidden in our personal archives. Clarence's brief but meaningful life, his dedication to teaching and faith, and the deep affection his family and community had for him come through so clearly in this tribute. This Friday Find is a heartfelt reminder of how even a single clipping can illuminate the character and legacy of an ancestor.

CLARENCE ALBERT MENTZER.

Clarence Albert Mentzer was born in Woodson County, Kansas, April 7th, 1886, and died in Iola Kansas, Jan. 23rd, 1919, age 32 years, 9 months and 16 days.

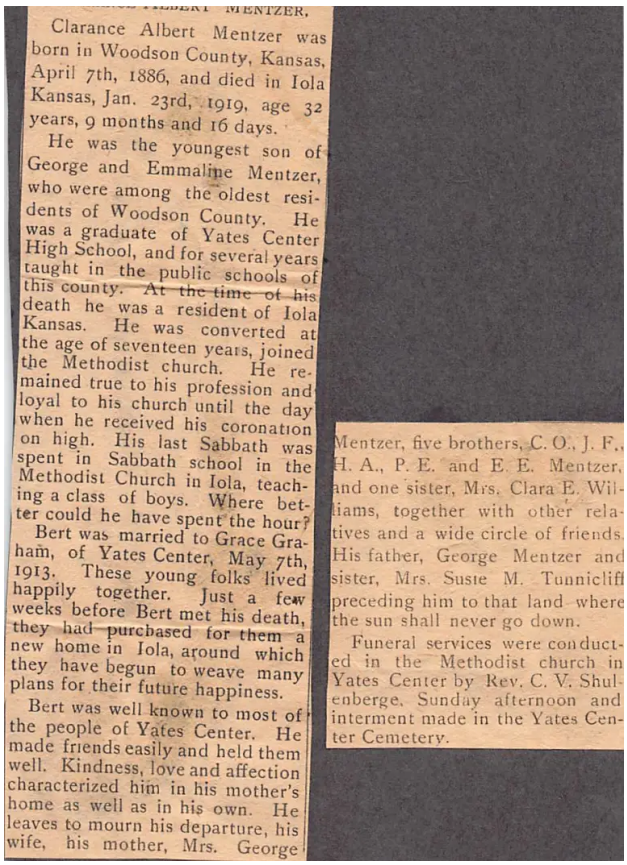
He was the youngest son of George and Emmaline Mentzer, who were among the oldest residents of Woodson County. He was a graduate of Yates Center High School, and for several years taught in the public schools of this county. At the time of his death he was a resident of Iola Kansas. He was converted at the age of seventeen years, joined the Methodist church. He remained true to his profession and loyal to his church until the day when he received his coronation on high. His last Sabbath was spent in Sabbath school in the Methodist Church in Iola, teaching a class of boys. Where better could he have spent the hour?

Bert was married to Grace Graham, of Yates Center, May 7th, 1913. These young folks lived happily together. Just a few weeks before Bert met his death, they had purchased for them a new home in Iola, around which they have begun to

weave many plans for their future happiness.

Bert was well known to most of the people of Yates Center. He made friends easily and held them well. Kindness, love and affection characterized him in his mother's home as well as in his own. He leaves to mourn his departure, his wife, his mother, Mrs. George Mentzer, five brothers, C.O., J.F., W.H., A.P., E. and E.E. Mentzer, and one sister, Mrs. Clara E. Williams, together with other relatives and a wide circle of friends. His father, George Mentzer and sister, Mrs. Susie M. Tunnicliff preceding him to that land where the sun shall never go down.

Funeral services were conducted in the Methodist church in Yates Center by Rev. C.V. Shullenberg, Sunday afternoon and interment made in the Yates Center Cemetery.



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Finding Clarence's obituary among my Mentzer records was more than just uncovering a date or name—it was discovering a story of love, service, and community. Pieces like this bring our ancestors to life and connect us more deeply to the past. I'm grateful this record was preserved, and I look forward to seeing what other hidden gems might be waiting in my files.

World War One War News

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 12, 2025
World War I,WWI
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/12/world-war-one-war-news/

As the United States mobilized for World War I, local draft boards across the country were tasked with meeting quotas to supply soldiers for the war effort. In **Nemaha County, Kansas**, this process played out in the pages of the *Courier Democrat*, offering a detailed look at how communities responded to the Selective Service Act.

In its **August 16, 1917** edition, the newspaper reported that the county had not yet met its initial quota of 113 men and would need to summon **226 more** in a second round of calls. Most of those named were young, single men—many of whom had filed agricultural or industrial exemption claims. Despite those efforts, the article suggested that few would be able to avoid service.

The published list of names paints a powerful picture of a rural Kansas community on the brink of major change, as ordinary citizens were called upon to serve in a global conflict. These clippings preserve a moment in time when local names became part of a much larger story.

TO CALL 226 MORE ON SELECTIVE DRAFT
We Print List of Men Who Will Be Summoned on the Second Call To Fill Quota

Out of the 226 men called on the first summons for men, there are not more than 76 at the most in sight and probably not that many. The 76 includes for the greater part men who have filed agricultural claims and men who made no claims. Likely some of the men who made agricultural claims will be able to make their claim stick. However, the Board is lucky if it gets 60 men out of the first 226. For this reason the second call, true to the form shown in other counties, is for the full

40 percent quota, which amounts to 113 men.

The Board said Tuesday that the names printed below are official. They print from the official list number 226, in the order in which they will be required to appear:

Summoned Monday, August 20

1139, Frank J. Loeffler, Seneca

676, Fred Kruger, Seneca

944, Wm. G. Walters, Bancroft

122, D. Hurst Fitzgerald, Seneca

642, Alva L. Rucker, Corning

939, James G. Karns, Ontario

222, Edw. E. Morris, Sabetha

906, Ellsworth Tibbetts, Pawnee

1337, Bert Lockhart, Goff

700, Percy G. Johnson, Goff

1250, Bermin DeBord, Centralia

1195, Benedict Rettele, Seneca

297, Wm. H. Harris, Sabetha

321, Vernie Ashley, Sabetha

736, Henry H. Meier, Bern

707, Richard Christianson, Bern

1245, Joseph P. McGrath, Axtell

1002, Walter Furnish, Goff

1151, Geo. H. Droge, Seneca

1101, Wm. E. Smith, Oneida

368, Floyd Atkinson, Oneida

974, Harry H. Bell, Wetmore

220, Fred Lamparter, Sabetha

926, John M. Howard, Pawnee

1010, Ivan K. Johnson, Goff

919, Willie G. Theis, Axtell

656, Frank D. Steele, Jr., Goff

1389, John Wiltz, Sabetha

314, Glenn Wilson, Centralia

1175, John F. Drier, Seneca

1070, John Weber, Seneca

738, Bennie R. Blute, Bern

1167, Emil Lenz, Bern

1097, Chas. H. McCall, Oneida

1191, Amos Smith, Seneca

1234, John G. Kokojan, Seneca

1360, Geo. W. Proctor, Sabetha

648, Wm. J. Sherlock, Centralia

1118, Jim R. Cox, Kelly

121, Sam'l E. Staver, Seneca

1221, John E. Wilson, Sabetha

1414, H. L. Bergman, Baileyville

292, Robert Lichty, Sabetha

Karl H. Gaston, Centralia

504, Harry E. McCabe, Corning

1044, Herman Hess, Oneida

1061, Henry Gudenkauf, Seneca

1201, Raleigh Croxton, Goff

470, Edwin L. Bailey, Goff

312, Melvin O. Johnson, Sabetha

1284, Herman Boeding, Kelly

1179, Geo. E. Schmitz, Seneca

753, Hugo C. McAlpine, Bern

130, Alvin R. Rogers, Seneca

385, Wm. M. Steele, Centralia

163, Phillip J. Weyant, Seneca

1023, John B. Dunning, Goff

424, A. J. Wenger, Sabetha

840, Glenn Maneval, Centralia

1347, Edwin Myrick, Sabetha

Elihu Martiney, DuBois

657, Elmer Massey, Goff

175, Milton B. Williams, Seneca

John Bungard, Sabetha

278, Winfield S. Hay, Sabetha

1240, Jos. G. Hedeman, Seneca

524, George A. Brun, Corning

911, Fred A. Fields, Baileyville

1172, John F. Marsh, Bern

532, Fred Eisenbarth, Corning

- 23, Palmer F. Jones, Seneca
- 1173, Fred Haus, Seneca
- 331, Carl P. Ackerman, Sabetha
- 1108, Harlan F. Starns, Oneida
- 492, C. E. Shumaker, Wetmore
- 1201, Charles M. Vorhes, Seneca
- 565, Roy L. Cox, Kelly
- 800, Irvin H. Gallagher, Corning
- 1447, David Haynes, Baileyville
- 1049, C. G. Hasenkamp, Seneca
- 1442, Verne Detweiler, Vermillion
- 115, Andrew Mandes, Bern
- 961, Ray W. Cassity, Wetmore
- 398, Jake B. Russ, Corning
- 349, Lloyd O. Kreim, Sabetha
- 1227, Will Kammer, Seneca
- 1407, Frank A. Burdick, Seneca
- 501, Harry H. Geever, Wetmore
- 1091, Henry H. Stephens, Onaga
- 378, Marion E. Bergsten, Baileyville
- 753, Homer Pfister, Corning
- 346, John H. Hatch, Bern
- 1040, Frank H. Stewart, Seneca
- 1024, Jess G. Wilcox, Bancroft
- 1291, Henry Weber, Seneca
- 1212, Lee Taylor, Centralia
- 789, Fred Wade, Sabetha
- John H. Dunn, Oneida
- 1156, James Kelly, Seneca

- 1393, Ernest McClain, Goff
- Albert W. Mathewson, Seneca
- 978, Wm. E. Simmons, Wetmore
- 1260, Karl W. Ozias, Centralia
- 506, Aldo Livingood, Corning
- 1291, James L. Glenn, Goff
- 1272, Arvil J. Hewitt, Seneca
- 877, Frank M. Barber, Centralia
- 385, Dudley B. Quick, Berwick
- 681, Louis A. Swartz, Bancroft
- 713, Eli Meyer, Oneida

Summoned Wednesday, August 22

- 935, Geo. E. Bittman, Bancroft
- 1121, Eli Strahm, Goff
- 1150, Chris H. Katz, Seneca
- 450, Earl S. Hewitt, Wetmore
- 1390, Ward B. Aumiller, Sabetha
- 113, Harley E. Wilcox, Seneca
- Wm. H. Hill, Bern
- 1004, Levi M. Wesley, Bancroft
- Wm. G. Goff, Seneca
- 1034, Chas. W. Little, Goff
- 808, Chanler Post, America City
- 780, Delbert Channel, Soldier
- 364, Frank L. Ratzlaff, Seneca
- 267, Thos. J. Andrews, Sabetha
- 421, Jacob R. Groff, Bern
- 940, Verne Connor, Bancroft
- Geo. H. Stemmer, Seneca
- 1254, Wm. L. Coe, Centralia
- 169, Collins Wilkinson, Seneca
- 436, Willard Jones, Sabetha
- 396, Ulrich Strahm, Sabetha
- 898, Frank Hazeltine, Wetmore
- 1304, Ira L. Bobbitt, Oneida
- 1107, George Riley, Oneida
- Frank G. Milner, Centralia
- 862, Clyde Jones, Vermillion
- 1406, Gustav Kloepper, Baileyville
- 257, Peter Moreno, Sabetha
- 1109, Wm. F. Parrott, Oneida
- 155, Clyde H. Jenkins, Seneca
- Melvin H. Ewing, Sabetha
- Raymond S. Dean, Sabetha
- Joe McNally, Corning
- Harry Durland, Centralia
- Marshall Collins, Bancroft
- Ralph R. Shepherd, Seneca
- Frank T. Gockel, Baileyville
- Milton E. Mishler, Sabetha
- Charles W. Bigham, Sabetha
- Oliver F. Rokey, Oneida
- Henry B. Kuhlman, Kelly
- Edward L. Hund, Seneca

- Carl W. Leuze, Sabetha
- Joseph B. Burris, Seneca
- Warren S. Ash, Sabetha
- Paul L. Kirk, Axtell
- August H. F. Plinke, Seneca
- A. L. L. Scoville Jr., Seneca
- Charles Gaston, Centralia
- Frank H. Ronnebaum, Seneca
- Leland H. Holsiter, Sabetha
- Hubert W. Howland, Sabetha
- Clarence A. Alexander, Goff
- Ray C. Phillipi, Sabetha
- John Wegman, Sabetha
- Louis Kadleck, Hanover
- Joe V. Bueltel, Seneca
- Clarence Miller, Seneca
- Ernest Hanin, Bern
- Leroy C. Keeney, Onaga
- Benedict Oldering, Baileyville
- Edward H. Clark, Seneca
- Bennett Jones, Seneca
- Lawrence Lanning, Sabetha
- Joseph B. Lemkuhl, Kelly
- Forest D. Noble, Vermillion
- Walter J. Stevens, Seneca
- Edwin Armstrong, Centralia
- Frank A. Schmitz, Seneca
- Fred C. Patterson, Sabetha
- Clayton Brougher, Sabetha
- Matson M. Miller, Seneca
- Louis F. Vantvravers, Centralia

This call for 226 more men from Nemaha County serves as a poignant reminder of the local impact of a global war. Behind each name printed in the *Courier Democrat* was a life suddenly altered—young men leaving behind farms, families, and familiar routines to serve their country. For genealogists and local historians, these draft lists offer more than just names—they offer a window into the emotions, decisions, and sacrifices that shaped communities during World War I. As we reflect on this era, we honor not only those who served but also the towns that supported them.

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 13, 2025
Briles,Crawford,Harding
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/13/saturday-night-genealogy-fun-152/

Calling all Genea-Musings Fans:

It's Saturday Night again –

Time for some more Genealogy Fun!!

Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision.

1) Let's play the game "Two Truths – One Lie." Tell three family stories – two must be true, and one must be a lie – an untruth.
2) Have your readers guess which story was the lie, and their reasons for picking that story.

Which of the following are true and which is the lie?

1. My fourth great grandfather, William Harding of Newburgh, New York, owned a sloop called The Debby. William and his sloop helped transport reinforcements to Gen. Gates at Albany during the revolutionary war. Later, William joined his brother, George and George's family in New York city, taking with him 3 horses and one cow. He was forced to leave The Debby behind. After the war, William and George and their families migrated to New Brunswick.
2. My grandfather, Edward Osmond Briles had a variety of occupations. As a young man, he ran a threshing machine in Allen county, Kansas. A few years later, he was the owner of Briles Auto Repair and Garage in Iola, Kansas. By 1930, he was known as the 'picture show man' in Buffalo, Kansas. In 1933, E O Briles owned the Lyric Theater in

Emporia Kansas, where he was arrested multiple times for operating a picture show on Sunday.
3. My 4th great grandfather, James Crawford was a resident of Fort Boonesborough, Kentucky in 1780. Also in Fort Boonesborough at the time was his wife, Rebecca Anderson, Rebecca's father, John Anderson, and her sister Mary Anderson Kennedy.

Which story is the lie? Why to you think it is the lie?

Color Coding

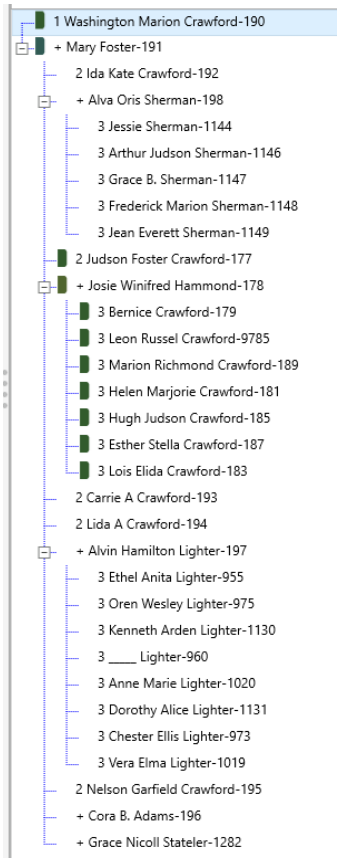
By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 14, 2025
RootsMagic
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/14/color-coding/

Have you ever used a software feature one way—only to later discover it has a lot more potential than you realized?

That's been my experience with RootsMagic's color coding. The program allows for ten different color code sets, but until recently, I'd only been using two. One set highlights my ancestral lines, while the other tracks the various Crawford lines in my tree. In both cases, the colors help me easily follow descendants through different branches.

A recent discussion in a Facebook group got me thinking differently. Someone suggested using color coding to track individuals who've been edited—a task I hadn't considered before. That sparked an idea. Why not use color coding to monitor other ongoing tasks?

So, I've now added new codes to help me track two specific things: whether a photo has been shared to a person's FamilySearch profile and whether a narrative report has been added to their WikiTree profile.



Using color coding in this expanded way will make it much easier to see what I've done—and what still needs attention.

Microsoft Publisher

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 15, 2025
Software
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/15/microsoft-publisher/

Microsoft Publisher Is Going Away – What's Next?

Do you use Microsoft Publisher? If so, you may be surprised to learn that Microsoft has announced it will discontinue Publisher in **October 2026**.

I first learned of this news from two Facebook groups I follow: *Small Museums Network* and *Small Church Media*. The announcement sparked a lot of discussion among members, many of whom rely on Publisher for creating newsletters, flyers, and signage.

Curious to learn more, I turned to Google. One of the AI-generated responses suggested saving Publisher files as Word documents. Since I often use Publisher to precisely position images and text on a page, I was skeptical. To test it, I tried converting a Nemaha County Historical Society newsletter from Publisher to Word—and it didn't go well. The formatting didn't hold, and the layout was lost with only the text being saved.

Members of the Facebook groups recommended converting existing Publisher files to PDFs to preserve their formatting. This seems to be the most reliable method for archiving past projects.

As for alternatives, there are several options out there. A helpful article from Intellezy titled *Top 5 Microsoft Publisher Alternatives* explores some of the best tools available.

For my work with the historical society, I've started transitioning to **Canva**. Canva offers **free accounts to nonprofit organizations**, which makes it an attractive and budget-friendly option. While I'm still learning the platform, I've already

created a few display placards using Canva. Unlike Word or PowerPoint, Canva lets me design based on the exact size I need—making it a great fit for signage and exhibits.

If you're a Publisher user, now's a good time to start exploring your options. Change is coming, but thankfully, there are some great tools out there to help you adapt.

Using Museum Collections

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 16, 2025
Nemaha County
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/16/using-museum-collections/

Have you ever turned to a small museum or local historical society in search of information about your family history?

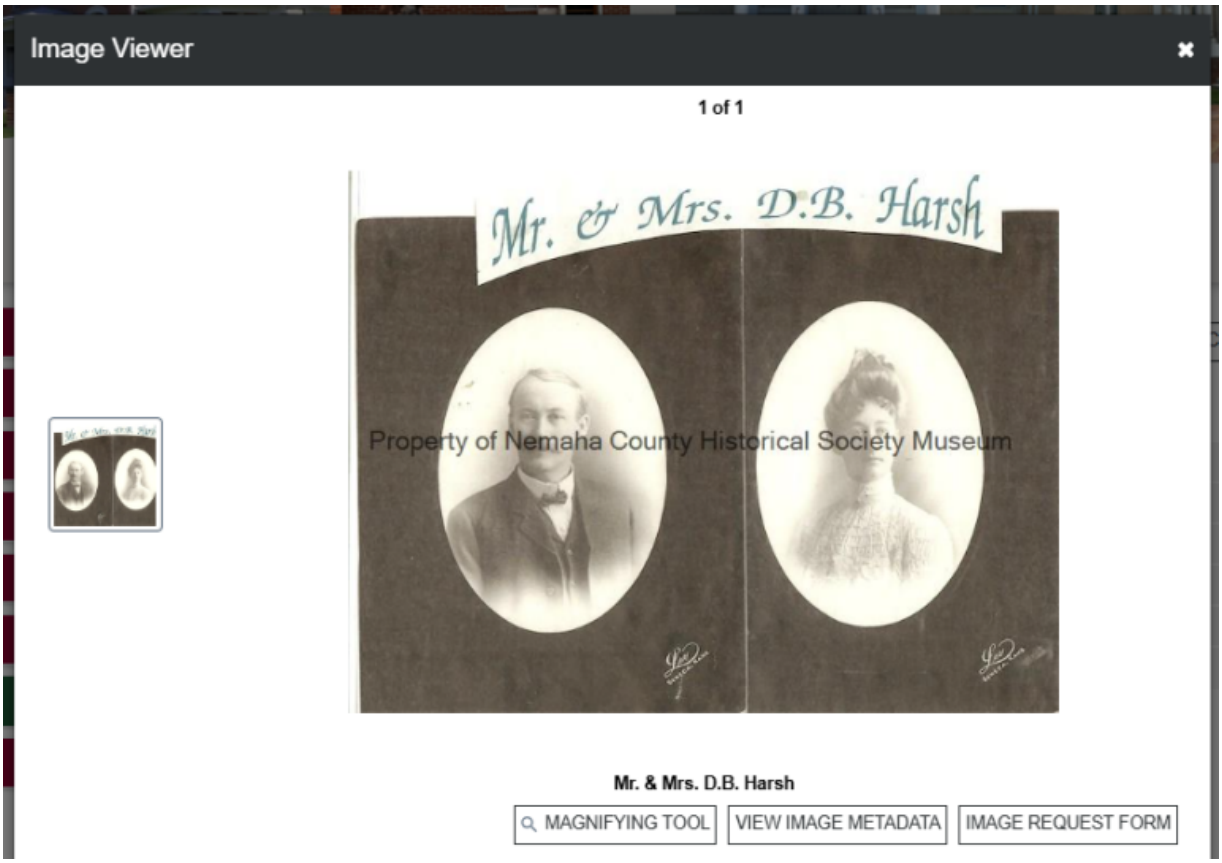
In my early days of research, writing letters to these societies was a routine part of the process. Before the days of Ancestry and FamilySearch, local repositories were often the best—and sometimes only—places to find certain records. While the rise of online databases has made research more accessible, it may also have led many to overlook the valuable resources still held by local organizations.

Fortunately, many historical societies now use museum software that allows the public to browse their collections online. The Nemaha County Historical Society, for example, has offered public access to its holdings for several years, and they recently upgraded their museum software to further improve that access.

Using these public databases, researchers can:

- Browse the society's holdings and create a list of items relevant to their research
- Submit that list to the museum staff ahead of a visit so materials can be pulled in advance
- Request digital copies of specific images directly through the site

Nemaha County's new PastPerfect interface makes this especially easy. When you find an image of interest, simply click on it to open a detailed view, where you'll also see an option to submit a request form for a digital copy.



Don’t underestimate what these local institutions might hold—they can be a goldmine for uncovering your family’s story.

List of museums providing public access via PastPerfect Museum Software

John C. Nafus

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 17, 2025
Nafus
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/17/john-c-nafus/

Nafus Family on Heartland Genealogy

The Family of John C. Nafus

John C. Nafus [LJP2-ZQK]was born in 1797 in New York. He was the son of William S. Nafus and Salome Carpenter. By the 1820s, he had moved west, purchasing 80 acres of land in Wyandot County, Ohio, on April 1, 1825. He married **Susannah Anna Miller** around 1827, likely in New York, before settling in Ohio.

John and Susannah's early years of marriage were spent in Ohio, where they lived in Wyandot County in 1828 and in Crawford County by 1830. Over the next few years, John bought and sold property, including land in Crawford County and later in McCutchenville, Ohio. In 1840, the family relocated to Lake County, Indiana. John continued to acquire land, purchasing another 80 acres in Indiana in 1841 and filing additional land entry papers in 1844.

Susannah passed away on March 4, 1844, in Lowell, Lake County, Indiana. At the time of her death, she and John were the parents of three known children:

Children of John and Susanna Nafus

1. **Sarah Jane Nafus**, born January 28, 1828, in Ohio, later married **James Wilbern Jennings** on April 22, 1849, in Grayson County, Texas. The couple had several children, including **Andrew Palestine Jennings Sr.**, born in 1859 in Burnet County, Texas. Sarah and James lived in Texas for the remainder of their lives, settling first in Burnet

County and later in Williamson County. Sarah died on January 17, 1892, in Leander, Texas, and was buried in Bagdad Cemetery. James survived her by more than a decade, dying in Leander on November 6, 1905.
2. An **unnamed male child**, born before 1830, appears in the family records but remains unidentified.
3. **George M. Nafus**, born around 1830 in Ohio, is recorded in the 1850 census as residing in Grayson County, Texas, alongside his father and half-siblings.

After Susannah's death, John remarried. On May 20, 1846, he wed **Rosannah Chandler** in Porter County, Indiana. By 1850, the family had moved once again, this time to Grayson County, Texas, where they are found in the federal census. John spent his later years in Texas, where he eventually passed away, although the exact date of his death remains unknown.

Throughout his life, John C. Nafus was a pioneer settler, moving steadily westward from New York to Ohio, Indiana, and ultimately Texas. His legacy continued through his children, particularly Sarah Jane, whose descendants carried on the family name in Texas.

The above narrative was written by ChatGPT based on the following genealogy report generated by RootsMagic.

RootsMagic Narrative Report

John C. Nafus was born in 1797 in New York.

He purchased land being 80 acres in section 3 of township 1 South of Range 14 East of the 1st Prime Meridian on 1 Apr 1825 in Wyandot County, Ohio. [1]

He married Susannah Anna Miller about 1827 in New York. [2]

He lived in Wyandot County, Ohio in 1828. [3]

John lived in Crawford County, Ohio in 1830. [4]

He sold land on 16 Apr 1836 in Crawford County, Ohio. [5]

He purchased on 16 Jun 1836 in McCutchenville, Crawford, Ohio, United States. [6]

John lived in Lake, Indiana, United States in 1840. [7]

He purchased land being 80 acres in section 29 of township 33 in range 8 west on 16 Feb 1841 in Indiana, United States. [8]

He filed land entry papers land being the East half of the NE quarter of section 29 in township 33 north of range 8 west of 2nd PM on 1 Aug 1844 in Lake, Indiana, United States. [9]

He married Rosannah Chandler on 20 May 1846 in Porter, Indiana, United States. [10–13]

John lived in Grayson, Texas, United States in 1850. [14]

He died in Grayson, Texas, United States.

Susannah Anna Miller

She married John C. Nafus about 1827 in New York. [2]

Susannah Anna Miller [2] died on 4 Mar 1844 in Lowell, Lake, Indiana, United States. [2] John C. Nafus and Susannah Anna Miller had the following children:

11. **Sarah Jane Nafus** was born on 28 Jan 1828 in Ohio. [2,15]

Sarah Jane Nafus and James Wilbern Jennings were married on 22 Apr 1849 in Grayson, Texas, United States. [22–24]

She lived in Grayson, Texas, United States in 1850. [16]

She was the mother of Andrew Palestine Jennings Sr. who was born on 20 Aug 1859 in Burnet, Burnet, Texas, United States. [17–18]

Sarah lived in Burnet, Texas, United States in 1860. [19]

She lived in Burnet, Texas, United States in 1870. [20]

She lived in Williamson, Texas, United States in 1880. [21]

Sarah died on 17 Jan 1892 at the age of 63 in Leander, Williamson, Texas, United States. [15]

She was buried in 1892 at Bagdad Cemetery in Leander, Williamson, Texas, United States. [15]

James Wilbern Jennings was born on 22 Dec 1825 in Lafayette, Missouri, United States. [15]

He lived in Grayson, Texas, United States in 1850. [16]

James lived in Burnet, Texas, United States in 1860. [19]

He lived in Burnet, Texas, United States in 1870. [20]

He lived in Williamson, Texas, United States in 1880. [21]

James died on 6 Nov 1905 at the age of 79 in Leander, Williamson, Texas, United States. [15]

He was buried in Nov 1905 in Leander, Williamson, Texas, United States. [15]

12. **_____ Nafus** was born before 1830.

13. **Geo M Nafus** was born about 1830 in Ohio. [2]

He lived in Grayson, Texas, United States in 1850. [25]

Rosannah Chandler was born on 16 Oct 1807 in Indiana.

She married John C. Nafus on 20 May 1846 in Porter, Indiana, United States. [10–13]

She lived in Grayson, Texas, United States in 1850. [14]

ENDNOTES:

1. United States Bureau of Land Management, “General Land Office Records,” database with images, BLM.Gov (: viewed online 14 March 2025), John C Nafus.

2. “Cox Family Tree”, online tree, Debra Cox, My Heritage (https://www.myheritage.com/profile-381154391-1500203/john-c-nafus : viewed online 14 March 2025), ” John C Nafus

3. Commemorative Historical and Biographical Record of Wood County, Ohio: Its Past and Present (Chicago: J H Beers & Co, 1897), 1151-1152; Digital image, Archive.org, http://www.archive.org viewed online 6 March 2025.

4. 1830 U.S. Census, Crawford County, Ohio, population schedule, Tymochtee, Crawford County, ohio, page 163, Image 7 of 10, John C Naffus; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 13 March 2025)

5. Ohio, Wyandott County. Deed Records, 1826-1886. Film #7209590. John C Nafus, 16 April 1836; Vol. A: page 365-366; 221 and 222 of 352, digitized images, FamilySearch http://www.familysearch.org : viewed online 14 March 2025.

6. Ohio, Wyandott County. Deed Records, 1826-1886. Film #7209590. John C Nafus, 16 Jun 1836; Vol. A: page 422; 225 of 352, digitized images, FamilySearch http://www.familysearch.org : viewed online 14 March 2025.

7. 1840 U.S. Census, Lake County, Indiana, population schedule, Lake County, Indiana, page 172, Image 5 of 23, John C Nafus; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 14 March 2025)

8. “Land Records (BLM Tract Books)”, digitized images, FamilySearch http://www.familysearch.org: viewed onilne, 14 March 2025; Film #7111259. John C Nafus, 18 Feb 1841; Indiana, 26; Image 422 581 images.

9. Bureau of Land Management, “General Land Office Records,” database with images John C Navus.

10. “Indiana, Compiled Marriage Index, 1802-1892,” Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : Dodd, Jordan. Indiana Marriages 1802-1892, Porter County, Indiana, viewed online (6 July 2023), John C Nephis.

11. “Indiana, Compiled Marriage Index, 1802-1892,” Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : Dodd, Jordan. Indiana Marriages 1802-1892, [Location], [Book]; [Page]viewed online (6 July 2023), John C. Nephis.

12. “Indiana, Marriages, 1810-2001,” database, Ancestry, (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 6 July 2023), JOhn C Nephis.

13. “Indiana, Marriage Index, 1800-1941,” Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : County Court Records at Williamsport, IN, Porter County, Indiana, viewed online (6 July 2023), John C Nephis.

14. 1850 U.S. Census, Grayson County, Texas, population schedule, Grayson County, Texas, page 692, Image 20 and 21 of 46, family 115, Jn C Nafus; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 13 March 2025)

15. Find a Grave, database and images, Find a Grave (www.findagrave.com : viewed online 24 March 2025), memorial for Sarah Jane Nafus Jennings (1828-1892), Find a Grave Memorial no. 16570052, created by John Christeson / maintained by Bagdad Cemetery Assn, citing Bagdad Cemetery, Leander, Williamson County, Texas; accompanying photograph by John Christeson, Sarah Jane Nafus Jennings.

16. 1850 U.S. Census, Grayson County, Texas, population schedule, Grayson County, Texas, page 714, family 758, Jas M Jennings.

17. Find a Grave, database and images, Find a Grave (www.findagrave.com : viewed online 24 March 2025), memorial for Andrew Palestine Jennings (1859-1918), Find a Grave Memorial no. 16570170,

18. Texas, Death Certificates, 1903-1982, Andrew Palestine Jenninges, 7 March 1918; database on-line, Ancestry.com http://www.ancestry.com : viewed online 2 April 2025).

19. 1860 U.S. Census, Burnet County, Texas, population schedule, Burnet County, Texas, page 23, Image 23 of 60, family 154, Jas W Jennings; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 31 March 2025)

20. 1870 U.S. Census, Burnet County, Texas, population schedule, Burnet County, Texas, page 51, Image 7 of 22, family 376, J W Jennings; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 2 April 2025)

21. 1880 U.S. Census, Williamson County, Texas, population schedule, Williamson County, Texas, ED 157, page 30, Image 29 of 30, family 251, James W Jennings; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 2 April 2025)

22. “Texas, Select County Marriage Index, 1837-1965,” database, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 28 March 2025), Sarah Jane Neffers.

23. “Texas, Marriage Index, 1824-2017,” Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : Grayson County, Texas, viewed online (28 March 2025), Sarah J Nessers.

24. “Texas, Select County Marriage Index, 1837-1965,” database Sarah Jane Neffers.

25. Find a Grave, database and images, Find a Grave (www.findagrave.com : viewed online 24 March 2025), memorial for Roy John Hartman (1881-1962), Find a Grave Memorial no. 92969194,

Friday Find

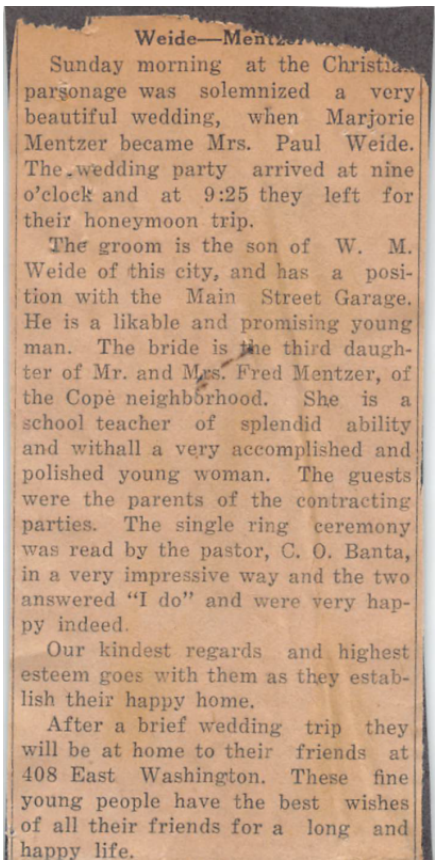
By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 18, 2025
Mentzer
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/18/friday-find-81/

Today's find is another newspaper clipping saved by my grandmother. This clipping is for the Paule Weide and Marjorie Mentzer wedding..

> **Weide—Mentzer**
>
> Sunday morning at the Christian parsonage was solemnized a very beautiful wedding, when Marjorie Mentzer became Mrs. Paul Weide. The wedding party arrived at nine o'clock and at 9:25 they left for their honeymoon trip.
>
> The groom is the son of W. M. Weide of this city, and has a position with the Main Street Garage. He is a likable and promising young man. The bride is the third daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Mentzer, of the Cope neighborhood. She is a school teacher of splendid ability and withall a very accomplished and polished young woman. The guests were the parents of the contracting parties. The single ring ceremony was read by the pastor, C. O. Banta, in a very impressive way and the two answered "I do" and were very happy indeed.
>
> Our kindest regards and highest esteem goes with them as they establish their happy home.
>
> After a brief wedding trip they will be at home to their friends at 408 East Washington. These fine young people have the best wishes of all their friends for a long and happy life.

Marjorie Emma Mentzer was the daughter of John Mentzer and Anna Wells. She would have been a double cousin to my

grandmother, Pauline Edith Mentzer Briles.



Weide—Mentz...

Sunday morning at the Christi... parsonage was solemnized a very beautiful wedding, when Marjorie Mentzer became Mrs. Paul Weide. The wedding party arrived at nine o'clock and at 9:25 they left for their honeymoon trip.

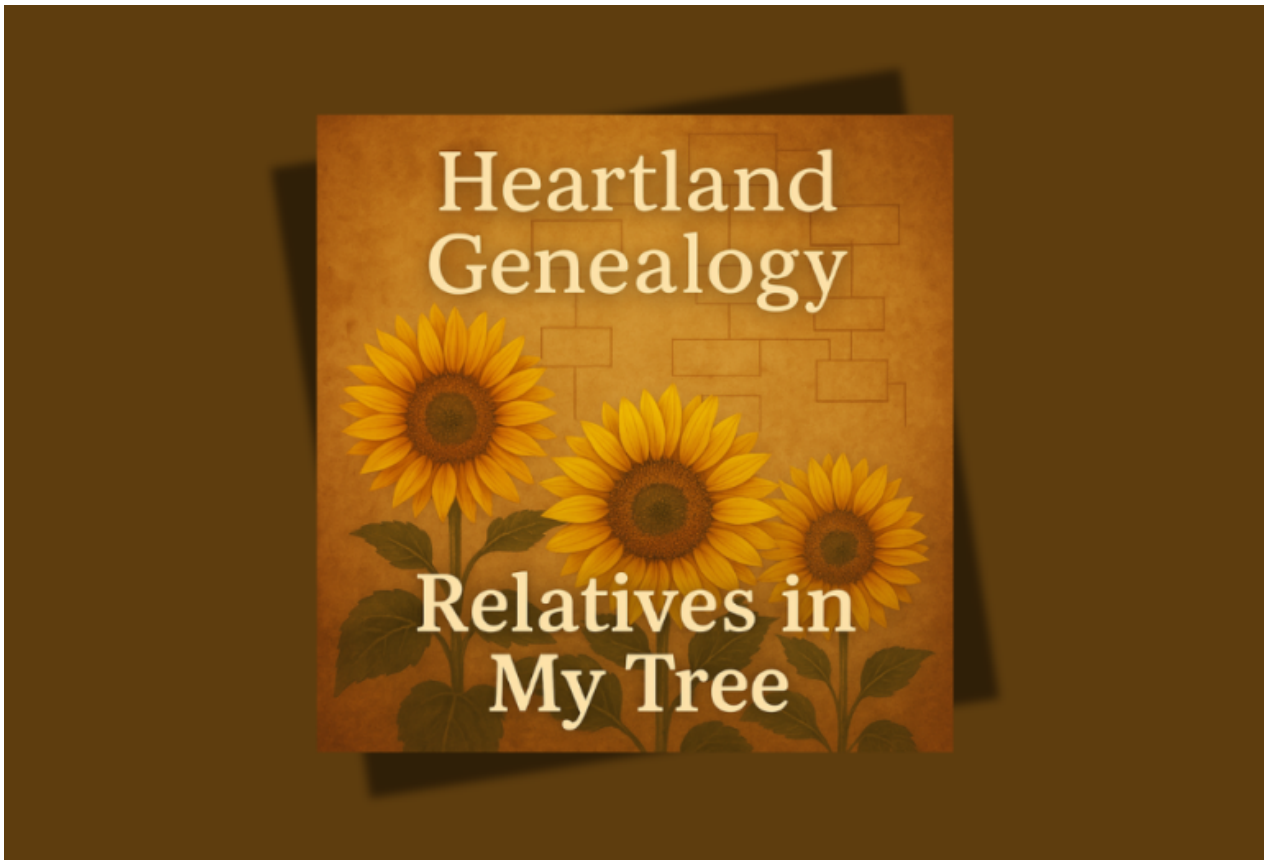
The groom is the son of W. M. Weide of this city, and has a position with the Main Street Garage. He is a likable and promising young man. The bride is the third daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Mentzer, of the Cope neighborhood. She is a school teacher of splendid ability and withall a very accomplished and polished young woman. The guests were the parents of the contracting parties. The single ring ceremony was read by the pastor, C. O. Banta, in a very impressive way and the two answered "I do" and were very happy indeed.

Our kindest regards and highest esteem goes with them as they establish their happy home.

After a brief wedding trip they will be at home to their friends at 408 East Washington. These fine young people have the best wishes of all their friends for a long and happy life.

Relatives in My Tree

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 19, 2025
Uncategorized
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/19/relatives-in-my-tree/



The Family of Bernice Crawford Allen and George James Allen

Bernice Crawford, born around 1892, spent her early years in **Dodge City, Kansas**. By 1900, she was living on 4th Avenue and remained in Dodge City through the 1910s. On **November 10, 1911**, she married **George James Allen** in Dodge City.

George was born **December 22, 1885**, in **Belpre, Edwards County, Kansas**. By the time of his marriage to Bernice, he was working as an engineer and later a mechanic, with employment at the **Santa Fe Trail Garage** in Cimarron, Kansas.

Life in Cimarron, Kansas

Shortly after their marriage, the couple settled in **Cimarron, Gray County, Kansas**, where they would raise their family. They experienced both joy and tragedy in the early years of their marriage. Between 1912 and 1920, they lost **four children**—three unnamed sons and one unnamed daughter—shortly after birth.

Despite these losses, George and Bernice raised **four children to adulthood**:

---

1. George Judson Allen

Born **April 1, 1914**, in Cimarron, George Judson later went by “Judson.” He grew up in Kansas and later moved with the family to **Tucson, Arizona**. He married **Marie Antoinette Catera** on **November 10, 1939**, in Pinal, Arizona. Judson registered for the WWII draft in Tucson and worked as a taxi driver. The couple lived in **Santa Monica** and **Westminster, California**, before Judson’s death on **October 21, 1969**, in **Millard County, Utah**. He was buried in **Holden Cemetery** in Utah. Marie passed away in **2007** in California.

---

2. Charmaine Aletha Allen

Charmaine was born **March 13, 1916**, in Cimarron and spent her early years in Kansas and Arizona. On **February 22, 1934**, she married **Fred Alvis**, who was born in Texas. The couple lived in **San Bernardino** and later **Dallas, Texas**. Charmaine died in Dallas on **January 30, 1976**, and is buried at **Little Bethel Memorial Park** in Duncanville, Texas. Fred passed away in **April 1974**.

---

3. Bernice Arlene Allen

Born **January 23, 1922**, in Cimarron, Bernice Arlene moved to **Tucson** with her family and later settled in **Oroville, Butte County, California**. She married **Ernest Vernon Bradley** on **October 15, 1941**, and the couple later divorced in 1970. Bernice died on **September 15, 1988**, in California.

---

4. Theda Ruth Allen

Theda was born **October 30, 1924**, in Cimarron and was also raised in Arizona. She married **Robert Edwin Frisch** on **October 19, 1957**. The couple lived in **Tucson** and later **Lawndale, California**. Robert passed away in **1979**, and Theda died on **November 2, 1994**, in Tucson.

Later Years

By the **1930s**, the Allen family had relocated to **Tucson, Pima County, Arizona**, residing at **1500 Park Avenue** for many years. George registered for the draft again in **1942**, this time in **Los Angeles, California**, suggesting some movement between Arizona and California.

Bernice Allen passed away on **August 2, 1959**, in **Kelseyville, Lake County, California**, at the age of 67. She was laid to rest in **Kelseyville Cemetery**.

Her husband, **George James Allen**, outlived her by several years. He died on **November 7, 1963**, at the age of 77, and was buried beside her in **Kelseyville Cemetery**.

This family's journey from **Dodge City to Cimarron, Tucson, and finally California** reflects a common migration path of 20th-century Americans in search of work and opportunity. Through hardship and relocation, Bernice and George raised a family whose descendants spread across the West and Southwest.

Check Out Bernice Crawford's profile

- FamilySearch 9V5K-DNQ
- WikiTree Crawford-8398
- Ancestry Tree: Heartland Genealogy

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 20, 2025
SaturdayNightGenealogyFun
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/20/saturday-night-genealogy-fun-153/

Calling all Genea-Musings Fans: It's Saturday Night again – Time for some more Genealogy Fun!!

Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision.

1) We all have a plethora of surnames in our family trees – and some of them are funny, strange, interesting, or unique. Please share five of your funny, strange, interesting or unique surnames in your ancestry. How are they related to you?

OK, I cheated. I asked ChatGPT for help! Below is the original prompt:

> This week's genealogy fun blogging prompt asks us to identify any funny, strange, interesting or unique surnames in our tree. THe following is information regarding my 7th generation of ancestors. Do you find any funny, strange, interesting or unique surnames? If so, list them and state why you selected them:

And this is what ChatGPT said about my list of 7th generation ancestors:

> What a rich ancestral chart! After reviewing the surnames from your 7th generation, here are several that stand out as **funny, strange, interesting, or unique**—along with a short explanation for each:
>
> ---
>
> ### Unique or Unusual Surnames
>
> 1. **Ostrander**
>   - This name has a strong Dutch flavor and a lyrical sound. It stands out because it feels both geographical and musical—almost like a fictional place or character name.
> 2. **Ralston**
>   - Though more common in some areas, "Ralston" has a formal, even noble tone. It's also the name of a cereal brand (Ralston-Purina), which might make it pop in a modern context.
> 3. **Currey**
>   - An interesting spelling variation of the more common "Curry." This might throw off researchers expecting a simpler spelling.
> 4. **Nettleton**
>   - Sounds whimsical, almost like a village in a storybook. It has a cozy English countryside ring to it.
> 5. **Whiting Merry**
>   - This full name feels like something out of Dickens! "Merry" as a surname is especially rare and cheerful.
> 6. **Peabody**
>   - A surname often associated with academics and institutions (like the Peabody Museum), it has a dignified and historic vibe.
> 7. **Flewelling**
>   - A rare and charming surname—its unusual structure makes it memorable. It sounds like a verb ("flew well-ing") and is often a conversation starter.
> 8. **Beckerdite**
>   - A very uncommon and quirky surname. It could easily be mistaken for a mineral or element.
> 9. **Gallimore**
>   - Evokes mystery—feels like it belongs in a fantasy novel or historical saga.
> 10. **Mentzer**
>   - This name stands out for its strong, Germanic sound. Uncommon and quite distinctive.

11. **Lillibridge**
    - A lovely, poetic surname. It conjures imagery of a scenic place and is uncommon enough to feel very unique.
12. **Freelove** (given name)
    - While not a surname, the given name Freelove Butler is undeniably eye-catching. It reflects a historical naming style that can seem surprising or humorous to modern readers.
13. **Minnick**
    - Short and slightly playful sounding, it almost feels like a nickname or stage name.
14. **Green Wells**
    - Again, a full name that reads more like a location or poetic phrase than a person's name.

At the end of the response, ChatGPT asked if I'd like help turning the list into a blog post. (I'm always asking ChatGPT to help improve my posts, so this question did not surprise me.) Below is the text of the suggested post.

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun: Unusual Surnames in My Family Tree
Posted on Heartland Genealogy

This week's *Saturday Night Genealogy Fun* challenge asks us to identify any funny, strange, interesting, or unique surnames in our family tree. As I reviewed the surnames of my 7th-generation ancestors, a few really stood out—some for their rare spellings, some for their lyrical sound, and others because they simply made me smile.

Here are some of the most **interesting and unique surnames** from my 7th generation:

1. Ostrander

A strong Dutch surname with a musical quality. It's uncommon enough to catch your eye and ear, and it hints at deep colonial roots in New York.

2. Ralston

This surname sounds stately and refined. It also reminded me of the Ralston-Purina company, making it a bit of a modern brand-name crossover!

3. Currey

A twist on the more common "Curry." This variation often catches researchers off guard due to its uncommon spelling.

4. Nettleton

Doesn't it sound like a village in a Jane Austen novel? It has a cozy, storybook quality that makes it delightfully memorable.

5. Whiting Merry

This full name could be a character in a Dickens novel! "Merry" as a surname is rare—and cheerful.

6. Peabody

Often associated with museums and historical societies, Peabody has a sense of gravitas and old-world charm.

7. Flewelling

This one's quite rare and has a lyrical, almost airborne feel. It's the kind of surname you don't forget.

8. Beckerdite

Definitely unique! This surname has a quirky sound and could easily be mistaken for a mineral or scientific term.

9. Gallimore

This one sounds like it belongs in a fantasy novel—mysterious and strong.

10. Mentzer

A solid Germanic name with punch. Distinctive, sharp, and uncommon—perfect for making a surname search easier.

11. Lillibridge

This name sounds both elegant and poetic. You can almost imagine a small bridge in a garden somewhere called "Lillibridge."

12. Freelove *(Given Name)*

Freelove Butler may not be a surname, but the name certainly stands out. It reflects a colonial-era naming tradition that can seem humorous or surprising today.

13. Minnick

Short, punchy, and slightly playful. It feels more like a nickname than a surname.

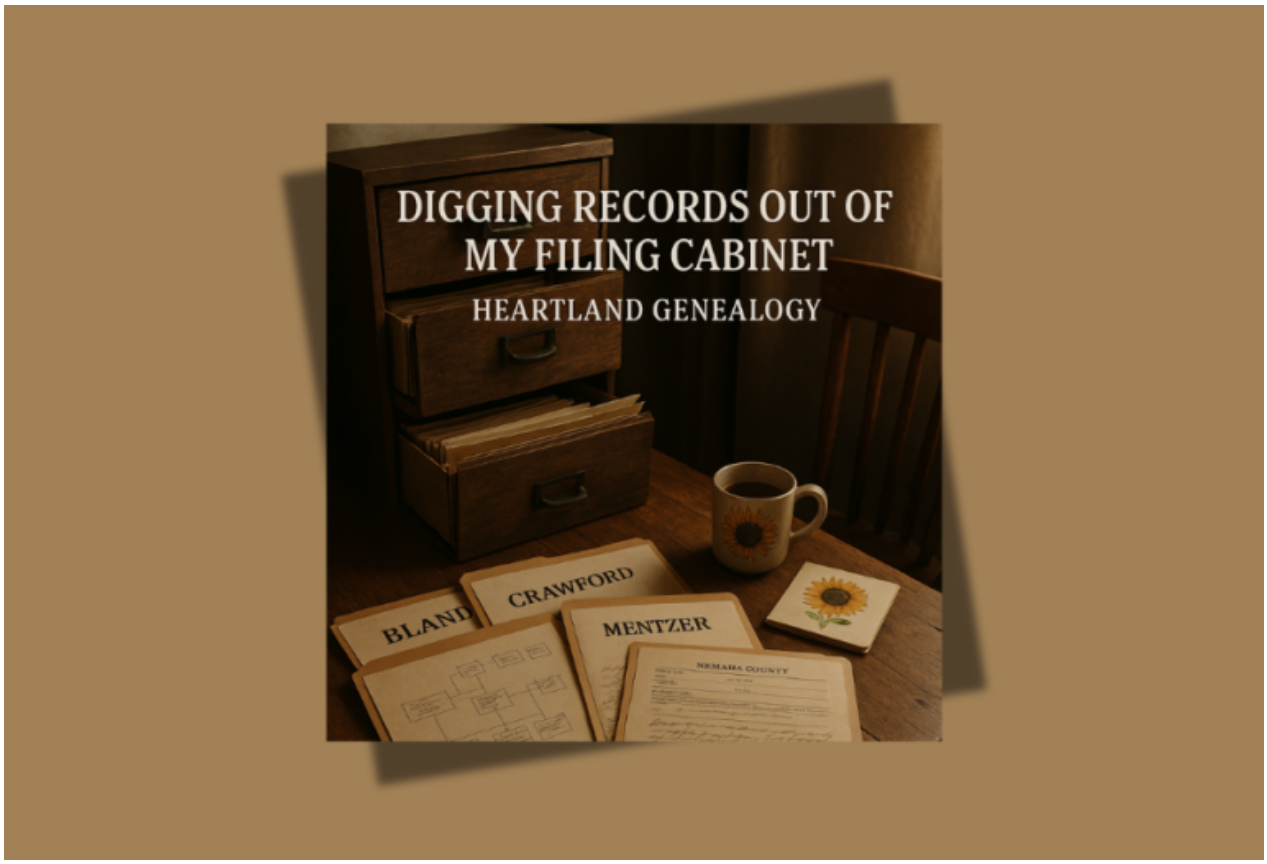
14. Green Wells

This full name sounds more like a serene location than a person! A beautiful combination that feels almost literary.

Conclusion
Looking at these names not only made me smile but also reminded me how much variety and personality can be found in our family trees. Whether poetic, peculiar, or just plain fun, these surnames tell stories all their own—and I'm grateful they're part of mine.

Monday's Diggings

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 21, 2025
Briles
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/21/mondays-diggings/

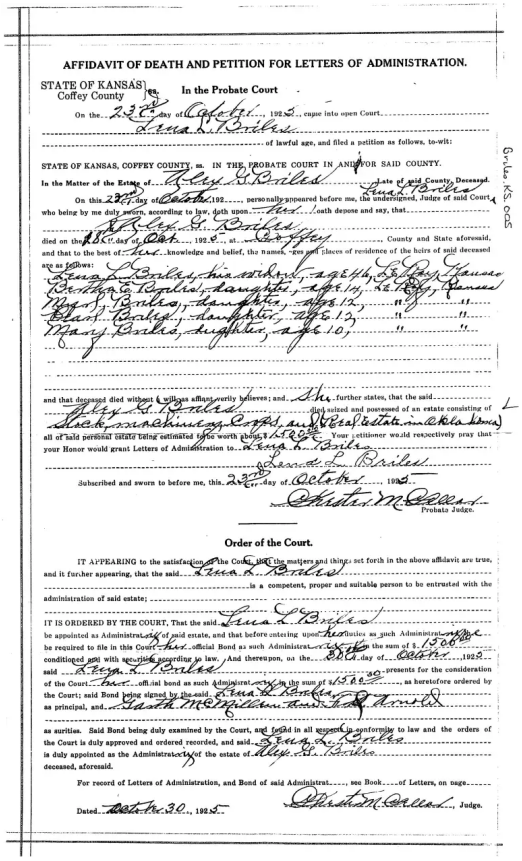


One of my ongoing genealogy goals is to reduce the paper clutter in my filing cabinets. To accomplish this, I've started pulling out documents, digitizing them, and sharing their stories here on the blog.

Today's featured document is an *Affidavit of Death and Petition for Letters of Administration* for Alex G. Briles, my first cousin three times removed.

> AFFIDAVIT OF DEATH AND PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION.
> STATE OF KANSAS
> Coffey County, ss. In the Probate Court
> On this 23rd day of October, 1925, came into open Court
> Lena L. Briles
> State of Kansas, Coffey County, ss. In the Probate Court in and for said County
> In the Matter of the Estate of Alex G. Briles, late of said County, Deceased.
> On this 23rd day of October, 1925, personally appeared before me, the undersigned, Judge of said Court,
> Lena L. Briles,
> who being by me duly sworn according to law, doth upon her oath depose and say, That
> Alex G. Briles,
> died on the 18th day of October, 1925, at Coffey County, and State aforesaid
> and that to the best of her knowledge and belief, the names, ages and residences of the heirs of said deceased,

are as follows:
Lena L. Briles, his widow, age 46, LeRoy, Kansas
Bertha E. Briles, daughter, age 14, LeRoy, Kansas – daughter;
Myrl Briles, daughter, age 12, ” “
Pearl Briles, daughter, age 12, ” “
Mary E. Briles, daughter, age 10, ” “
and that deceased dies without a will as affiant verily believes; And she further states that the said
Alex G. Briles died seized and possessed of an estate consisting of
stock, machinery, crops and rea estate in Oklahoma
all of said personal estate being estimated to be worth about $1500.0. Your petitioner would respectively pray that
your Honor would grant Letters of Administration to Lena L. Briles,
Lena L. Briles
Subscribed and sworn to before me, this 23rd day of October, 1925.
Kester M [Cellar],
Probate Judge.
Order of the Court.
It appearing to the satisfaction of the Court that the matters and things set forth in the above affidavit are true,
and it further appearing that the said Lena L. Briles
is a competent, proper and suitable person to be entrusted with the
administration of said estate:
It is ordered by the Court that the said Lena L. Briles
be appointed as Administratrix of said estate; and that before entering upon her duties of such Administratrix
be required to file in this Court her official bond as such Administratrix in the sum of $1,500, conditioned and with securities according to law. And thereupon, on the 30th day of October, 1925,
said Lena L. Briles presents for the consideration
of the Court her official bond in the sum of $1500.0, as heretofore ordered by
the Court; said Bond being signed by the said Lena L. Briles
as principal, an Garth McMillen and F D Arnold
as surities, Said bond being duly examined by the Court and found in all respects in conformity to law and the orders of
the Court is dully approved and ordered recorded, and the said Lena L. Briles
is duly appointed as the Administratrix of the estate of Alex G. Briles,
deceased aforesaid.
For record of Letters of Administration, and bond of said Administratr_____ see Book **_ of Letters, on page _**.
Dated October 30, 1925.
[Probate Judge’s Signature], Judge.



AFFIDAVIT OF DEATH AND PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION.

STATE OF KANSAS } ss. In the Probate Court
Coffey County }

On the 23rd day of October, 1925, came into open Court
Lena L. Briles
of lawful age, and filed a petition as follows, to-wit:

STATE OF KANSAS, COFFEY COUNTY, ss. IN THE PROBATE COURT IN AND FOR SAID COUNTY.

In the Matter of the Estate of Alex G. Briles late of said County, Deceased.

On this 23rd day of October, 1925, personally appeared before me, the undersigned, Judge of said County, who being by me duly sworn, according to law, doth upon oath depose and say, that Alex G. Briles died on the 20th day of Oct., 1925, at Burlington, County and State aforesaid, and that to the best of her knowledge and belief, the names, ages and places of residence of the heirs of said deceased are as follows: Lena L. Briles, this affiant, age 44, Burlington, Kansas; Barbara Briles, daughter, age 14, Burlington, Kansas; Mary Briles, daughter, age 12, " "; Clara Briles, daughter, age 12, " "; Mary Briles, daughter, age 10, " "

and that deceased died without a will as affiant verily believes; and she further states, that the said Alex G. Briles died seized and possessed of an estate consisting of Stock, machinery, Cattle, and Real Estate in Okla Homa all of said personal estate being estimated to be worth about $1,500.00. Your petitioner would respectively pray that your Honor would grant Letters of Administration to Lena L. Briles

Lena L. Briles

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this 23rd day of October, 1925.

Probate Judge.

Order of the Court.

IT APPEARING to the satisfaction of the Court that the matters and things set forth in the above affidavit are true, and it further appearing, that the said Lena L. Briles is a competent, proper and suitable person to be entrusted with the administration of said estate;

IT IS ORDERED BY THE COURT, That the said Lena L. Briles be appointed as Administratrix of said estate, and that before entering upon her duties as such Administratrix she be required to file in this Court her official Bond as such Administratrix in the sum of $ 1500.00 conditioned and with security according to law. And thereupon, on the 30th day of October, 1925, said Lena L. Briles presents for the consideration of the Court her official bond as such Administratrix in the sum of $1500.00, as heretofore ordered by the Court; said Bond being signed by the said Lena L. Briles as principal, and Sadie McMillan, Ross Smith as sureties. Said Bond being duly examined by the Court, and found in all respects in conformity to law and the orders of the Court is duly approved and ordered recorded, and said Lena L. Briles is duly appointed as the Administratrix of the estate of Alex G. Briles deceased, aforesaid.

For record of Letters of Administration, and Bond of said Administratrix, see Book of Letters, on page

Dated Oct. 30, 1925

Judge.

Links to Alex G. Briles

- My Ancestry Tree
- FamilySearch – LCPB-695

Maud Erwin's Family

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 22, 2025
FamilySearch,Nafus
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/22/maud-erwins-family/

Nafus Family on Heartland Genealogy

Have you ever found yourself scratching your head while trying to match the children named in an obituary to a family tree? That was exactly my situation while researching the descendants of **Sarah Nafus and her husband Joshua Erwin**. I was trying to sort out the family structure for their son, **Daniel Samuel Erwin**, and his wife, **Maud (Hudson) Erwin**.

According to FamilySearch, Daniel and Maud had **13 children**—including two listed as William. However, **Maud's 1962 obituary only names 11 children**, and one of those named is *not* included in the FamilySearch list. That discrepancy sent me down a rabbit hole of research.

I dug deeper and found obituaries for **two sons who died before Maud—Oscar and Floyd**, both passing in 1959. I also tracked down the obituary of **Charles Erwin**, who died in 2000, but is surprisingly **absent from the FamilySearch list**.

At this point, I turned to **ChatGPT** to help me sort out the confusion. Below was my prompt:

> *The following information is from four obituaries separated by a line. The first is for the mother, Maud who died in 1962. The next two are for sons, Oscar and Floyd who both died in 1959. The last is for Charles who died in 2000. Can you use these obituaries to compile a list of the children?*
> *[I then included the full text of all four obituaries]*

ChatGPT delivered a clear and organized response, reconciling the information and producing a **consolidated list of 14**

children—a number confirmed in Charles's obituary. Here's what it came up with:

> Certainly! Here's a transcription of the list of children for Maud Erwin as shown in the FamilySearch image:
>
> **Children (13):**
>
> 1. **Floyd Erwin**
> 1903–1959 • LCVQ-2WV
> 2. **Oscar Erwin**
> 1904–1959 • LCVQ-2FZ
> 3. **Edmond Erwin**
> 1908–1995 • K816-JZ1
> 4. **Edna M. Erwin**
> 1908–2003 • LCVQ-2GX
> 5. **Goldie Loretta Erwin**
> 1910–2007 • GCW7-VJ7
> 6. **Cleora Erwin**
> 1912–2010 • LCVQ-L9N
> 7. **Delbert Erwin**
> 1914–1996 • LCVQ-LH7
> 8. **Emma Erwin**
> 1916–2010 • LCVQ-L6J
> 9. **Elsie Erwin**
> 1918–2007 • G361-9MJ
> 10. **George William Erwin**
> 1921–1921 • G52H-7LQ
> 11. **George Lycurgus Erwin Jr**
> 1922–1978 • LKQG-9CP
> 12. **Herschel Erwin**
> 1924–2007 • LCVQ-G36
> 13. **Opal Marie Erwin**
> 1927–1991 • G361-212

Since my goal was to match this family to their **FamilySearch profiles**, I also shared a **screenshot of the children listed in FamilySearch** and asked ChatGPT to transcribe that list. Finally, I gave it a prompt asking it to **reconcile the names from the obituaries with the FamilySearch entries**, identifying which children appeared in both sources, who might be missing, and how they matched up.

> Absolutely! Below is a **reconciled list of Maud Erwin's children** combining the names found in the **four obituaries** (Maud, Oscar, Floyd, Charles) with the **FamilySearch list** you provided. I've included each child's **name as it appears in the obituaries**, matched with the **FamilySearch name and ID**:
>
> ---
>
> ### ✅ Sons:
>
> 1. **Floyd Erwin**
> - 📜 Obituary: Floyd Erwin
> - 📘 FamilySearch: Floyd Erwin • **LCVQ-2WV**
> 2. **Oscar Erwin**
> - 📜 Obituary: Oscar Erwin
> - 📘 FamilySearch: Oscar Erwin • **LCVQ-2FZ**
> 3. **Edmond Erwin**
> - 📜 Obituary: Edmond / Edmund Erwin
> - 📘 FamilySearch: Edmond Erwin • **K816-JZ1**
> 4. **Charles Erwin***(aka Chuck)*
> - 📜 Obituary: Charles Eugene "Chuck" Erwin
> - 📘 FamilySearch: Not explicitly listed in screenshot (possibly unlinked or not named Charles)

5. **Delbert Erwin**
   - 📜 Obituary: Delbert Erwin
   - 📘 FamilySearch: Delbert Erwin • **LCVQ-LH7**
6. **George Erwin**
   - 📜 Obituary: George Erwin (North Bend, Empire)
   - 📘 FamilySearch: George Lycurgus Erwin Jr • **LKQG-9CP**
7. **Herschel Erwin**
   - 📜 Obituary: Herschel Erwin
   - 📘 FamilySearch: Herschel Erwin • **LCVQ-G36**

✅ Daughters:

8. **Edna Gleason**
   - 📜 Obituary: Mrs. Edna Gleason
   - 📘 FamilySearch: Edna M. Erwin • **LCVQ-2GX**
9. **Goldie Frey**
   - 📜 Obituary: Mrs. Goldie Frey
   - 📘 FamilySearch: Goldie Loretta Erwin • **GCW7-VJ7**
10. **Cleora Heinz**

- 📜 Obituary: Mrs. Cleora Heinz
- 📘 FamilySearch: Cleora Erwin • **LCVQ-L9N**

11. **Emma Barney**

- 📜 Obituary: Mrs. Emma Barney
- 📘 FamilySearch: Emma Erwin • **LCVQ-L6J**

12. **Elsie Bennett / Elsie Tison**

- 📜 Obituary: Mrs. Elsie Bennett / Tison
- 📘 FamilySearch: Elsie Erwin • **G361-9MJ**

13. **Marie Swinney**

- 📜 Obituary: Mrs. Marie Swinney
- 📘 FamilySearch: Likely **Opal Marie Erwin** • **G361-212**

🟨 Not Mentioned in Obituaries (Likely Died Young):

14. **George William Erwin**

- 📘 FamilySearch: George William Erwin • **G52H-7LQ**
- ❌ Not mentioned in any obituary, suggesting he died in infancy (confirmed by birth/death year: 1921–1921)

🟨 Unmatched in FamilySearch Screenshot:

- **Charles E. Erwin** is missing from the FamilySearch list shown. Since his 2000 obituary confirms he was one of 14 children, he should be included in the tree. He may be:
  - Unlinked in the family group
  - Entered under a different name
  - Missing from this cropped screenshot

Conclusion

What started as a simple question—how many children did Maud (Hudson) Erwin have?—turned into a fascinating case study in reconciling records across multiple sources. By comparing obituaries with FamilySearch data and using AI tools like ChatGPT to assist in organizing the information, I was able to piece together a more complete picture of the Erwin family.

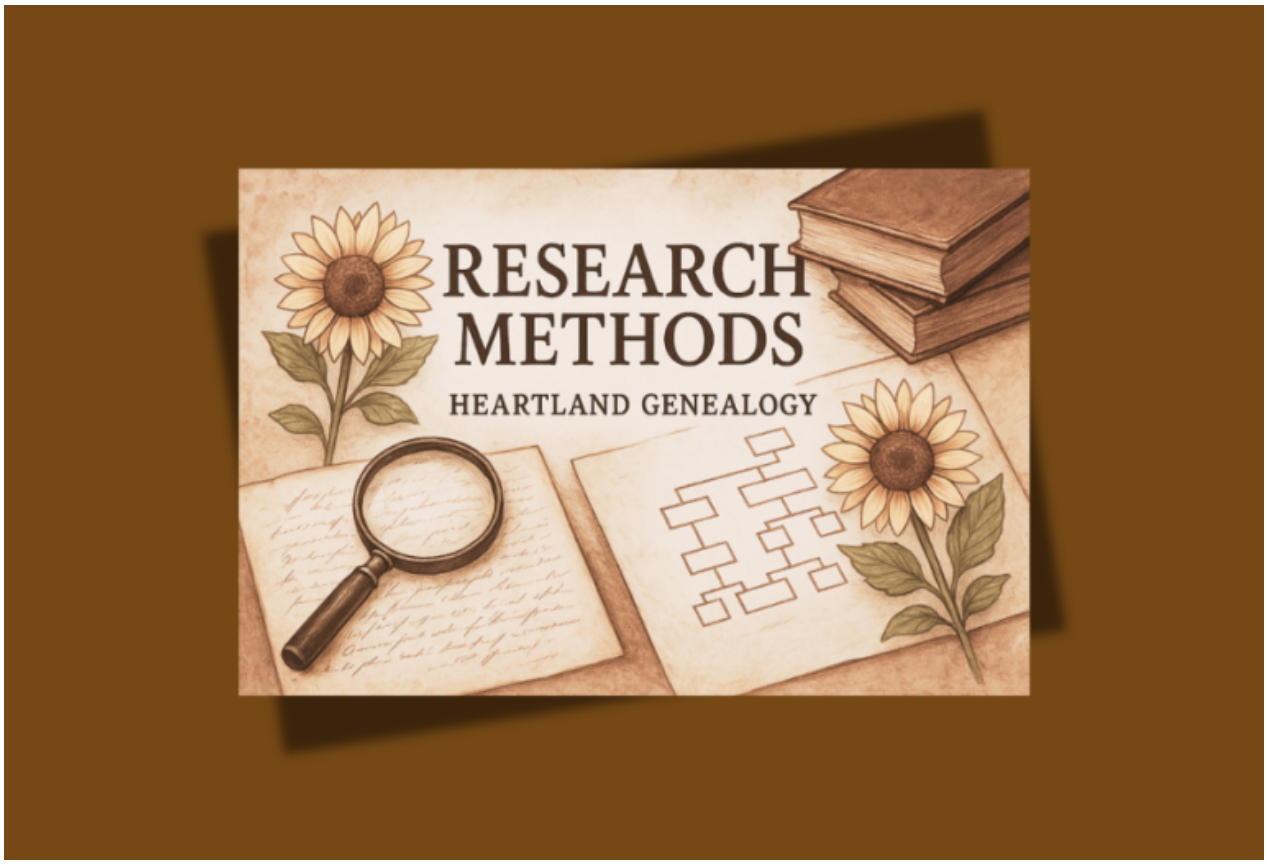
Not only did this process help confirm the identities of **all 14 children**, but it also revealed gaps in the online family tree—like the missing profile for **Charles Erwin**, who is clearly named in his own obituary but not yet linked on FamilySearch.

This experience is a reminder that even when we rely on trusted platforms like FamilySearch, it's essential to verify, cross-reference, and sometimes dig deeper to ensure accuracy. And with tools like ChatGPT to help us analyze and synthesize data, we can solve these puzzles more efficiently than ever.

Have you faced a similar challenge when comparing obituaries with online family trees? I'd love to hear how you approached it!

Spelling

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 23, 2025
Dutch,Nafus,Van Arsdale
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/23/spelling/



Don’t Get Stuck on the Spelling:

Why Name Variations Matter in Genealogy

Have you ever heard someone say, *“That’s not how my ancestor spelled their name”*? It’s a common belief—but one that can sometimes create roadblocks in genealogy research.

Unfortunately, some researchers get stuck on a single spelling and overlook valuable records in the process. A recent post by MyHeritage, *[Why Should You Consider Alternative Spellings When Searching Records?]*, highlights just how important it is to keep an open mind. Not only can alternate spellings help break through brick walls, but the article also offers practical tips for expanding your search strategies.

My Own Experience with Name Variations

When I first started researching, name spelling wasn’t something I focused on too much. But it was important to my grandmother. She was insistent that her mother’s name was spelled **Hutchison**—not **Hutchinson**.

However, as I dug into the records, I found both versions—often in official documents. In fact, *Hutchinson* appeared more frequently than my grandmother’s preferred spelling.

While many of the surnames on my five-generation pedigree chart have relatively stable spellings, that changes as I research further back.

The Challenge of Dutch Surnames

Several of my ancestral lines trace back to the Low Dutch settlers, and with those come a host of name variants. Two key surnames in my seventh generation are **Van Arsdale** and **Nafus**.

A March 19 post in the *Dutch Cousins in Kentucky* Facebook group reminded me that names were often recorded phonetically—how the clerk heard them. A 2018 post in the same group quoted *Finding Our Wooden Shoes, Vol. II* by Jim Cozine, explaining why the spelling of Dutch names can vary so much.

Some examples of interchangeable letters in medieval Dutch include:

- **c** and **k**
- **j** and **y**
- **f** and **v**

Other changes:

- **s** became **z** (and vice versa)
- **ij** or **y** became **i**
- **k** became **c**

Van Arsdale Variants

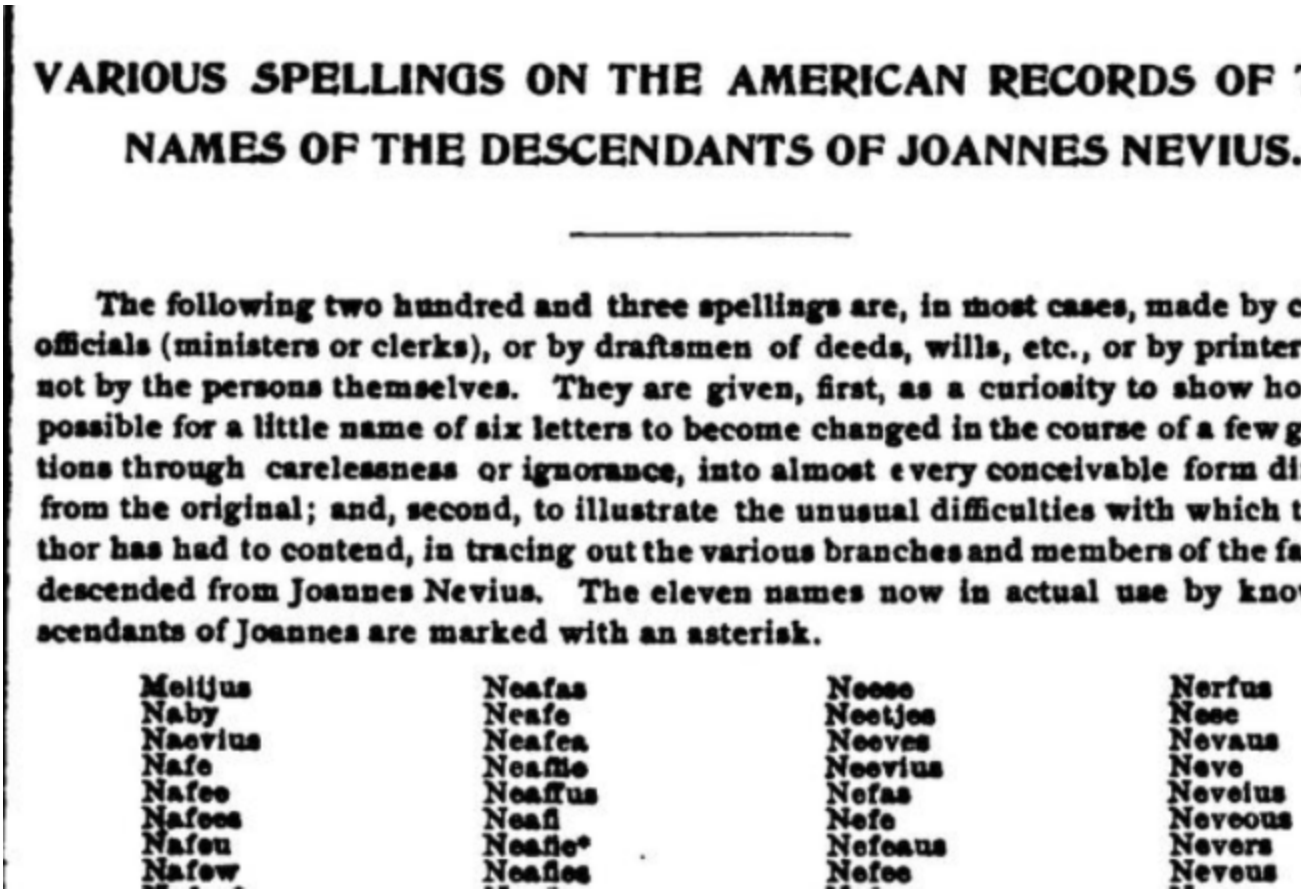
These spelling shifts resulted in a wide range of surname variations. Here's a partial list of known spellings for the Van Arsdale family, shared in the Facebook post:

> *VanArsdale, Van Arsdalen, Vanosdel, Vanorden, Van Ordon, Vanorsdale, Vann Ausdell, VanArsdall, VanArder, Vanarsdall, Van Norsdell, Van Norsdall, Van Aersdaelen, Van Nosdall, Fenosdal, Fenorsdall, Fanosdol, Van Ausdall, Vananglin, Van Ansdale, Van Orsdel, Van Osdol*

These include numerous phonetic and regional adaptations across generations.

Nafus and the Many Faces of Nevius

When it comes to my **Nafus** family, the spelling possibilities are even more numerous. According to the 1900 genealogy book, *Joannes Nevius… and His Descendants*, there are **203 documented variations** of the **Nevius** surname—**Nafus** among them.



VARIOUS SPELLINGS ON THE AMERICAN RECORDS OF THE NAMES OF THE DESCENDANTS OF JOANNES NEVIUS.

The following two hundred and three spellings are, in most cases, made by church officials (ministers or clerks), or by draftsmen of deeds, wills, etc., or by printers, and not by the persons themselves. They are given, first, as a curiosity to show how it is possible for a little name of six letters to become changed in the course of a few generations through carelessness or ignorance, into almost every conceivable form different from the original; and, second, to illustrate the unusual difficulties with which the author has had to contend, in tracing out the various branches and members of the families descended from Joannes Nevius. The eleven names now in actual use by known descendants of Joannes are marked with an asterisk.

Meitjus	Neafas	Neese	Nerfus
Naby	Neafe	Neetjes	Nese
Naevius	Neafea	Neeves	Nevaus
Nafe	Neaffie	Neevius	Neve
Nafee	Neaffus	Nefas	Nevelus
Nafees	Neafi	Nefe	Neveous
Nafeu	Neafie*	Nefeaus	Nevers
Nafew	Neafies	Nefee	Neveus

That list has been an invaluable tool as I search for ancestors across time, language, and shifting borders.

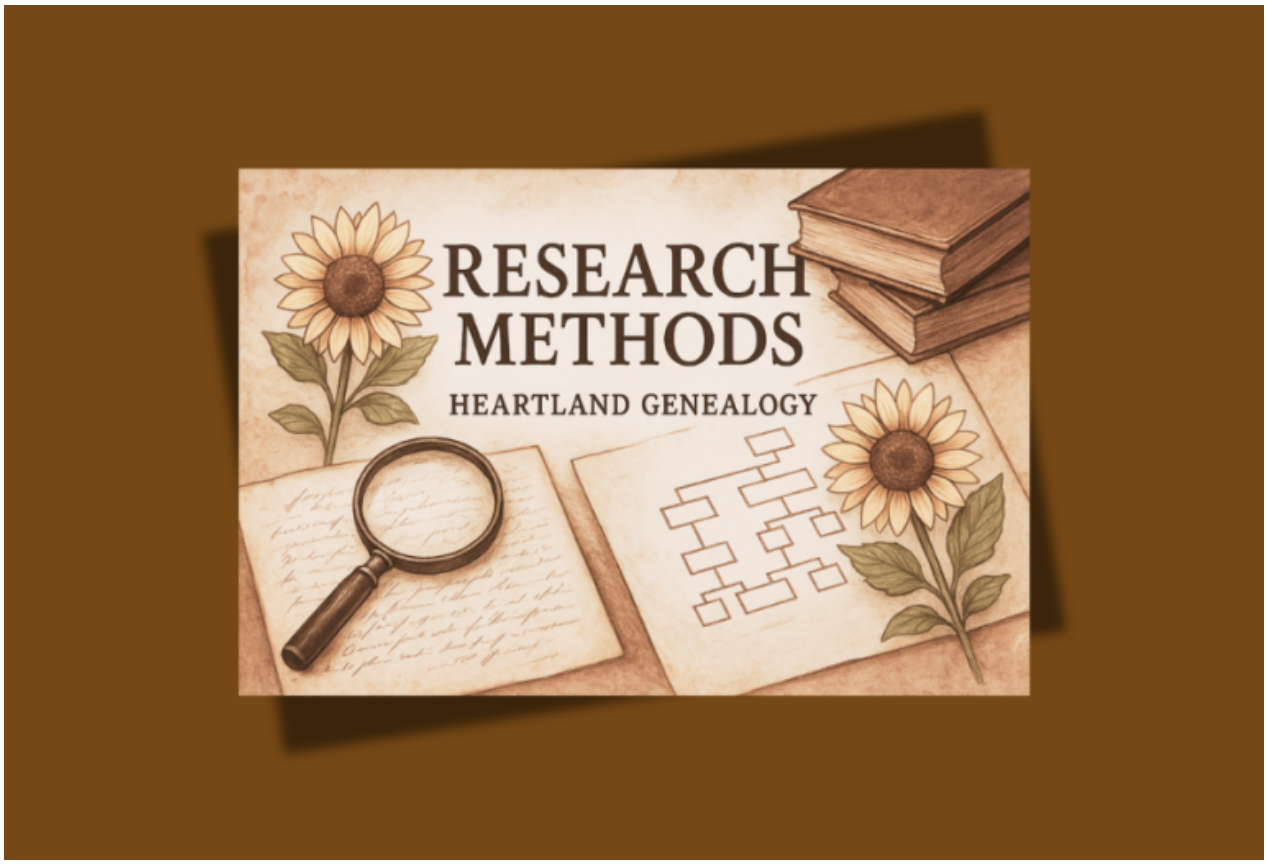
Final Thoughts

I'm grateful for fellow researchers who have shared these compiled lists of surname variants. Keeping an open mind—and a flexible search strategy—has helped me find records I might have otherwise missed.

So, next time you run into a roadblock in your research, ask yourself: *Is there another way to spell that name?*

Soundex

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 24, 2025
Ancestry,FamilySearch,Soundex
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/24/soundex/



Rediscovering the Power of Soundex in Genealogy Research

Do you remember using Soundex to locate ancestors in the 1900 U.S. Census? I certainly do. I spent hours scrolling through Soundex microfilm for an entire state, trying to pinpoint someone's location in the census. With today's digitized records and Ancestry's robust hinting system, this once-essential tool is often overlooked—but it still has incredible value.

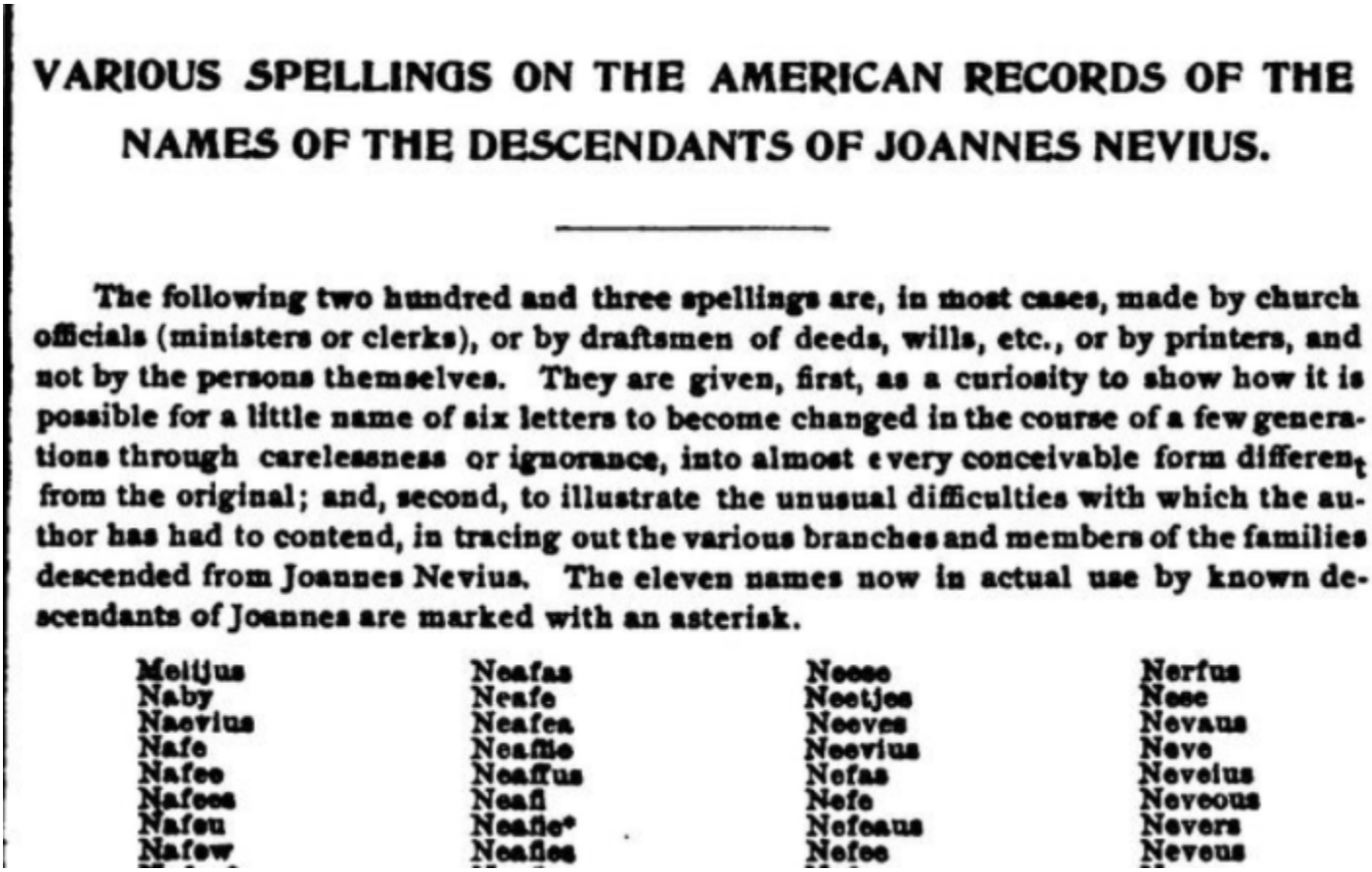
The beauty of the Soundex system lies in its ability to group similar-sounding surnames under the same code, regardless of spelling. My Crawford surname is a perfect example. Its Soundex code is **C616**. Even when older records spell it as "Crafford," it still shares the same code—C616—thanks to Soundex.

In the early days of research, I manually used a Soundex chart to determine the code for each surname. The system keeps the first letter of the surname and follows it with three numbers based on the sounds of the next consonants. Today, there's no need to calculate by hand—online Soundex calculators do the job in seconds.

The real power of Soundex is in its ability to simplify the search process. Instead of trying every possible variation of a surname, you can search by Soundex and retrieve records for multiple spellings. While Crawford doesn't have many variants, some of my Dutch surnames are another story entirely.

Take my NAFUS surname. I've seen it listed as Naffus, Naphus, Nevius, and even Nefjes in online trees and historical documents. Many of these share the Soundex code **N120**. Variants like "Nefjes" (due to the 'J') would be **N122**, while versions with an inserted 'R' may have entirely different codes depending on letter placement. According to the *Joannes*

Nevius book, there are nearly **300 variations**—but Soundex narrows them down to just a few key codes.



VARIOUS SPELLINGS ON THE AMERICAN RECORDS OF THE NAMES OF THE DESCENDANTS OF JOANNES NEVIUS.

The following two hundred and three spellings are, in most cases, made by church officials (ministers or clerks), or by draftsmen of deeds, wills, etc., or by printers, and not by the persons themselves. They are given, first, as a curiosity to show how it is possible for a little name of six letters to become changed in the course of a few generations through carelessness or ignorance, into almost every conceivable form different from the original; and, second, to illustrate the unusual difficulties with which the author has had to contend, in tracing out the various branches and members of the families descended from Joannes Nevius. The eleven names now in actual use by known descendants of Joannes are marked with an asterisk.

Meitjus	Neafas	Neese	Nerfus
Naby	Neafe	Neetjes	Nese
Naevius	Neafea	Neeves	Nevaus
Nafe	Neaffie	Neevius	Neve
Nafee	Neaffus	Nefas	Neveius
Nafees	Neafi	Nefe	Neveous
Nafeu	Neafie*	Nefeaus	Nevers
Nafew	Neafies	Nefee	Neveus

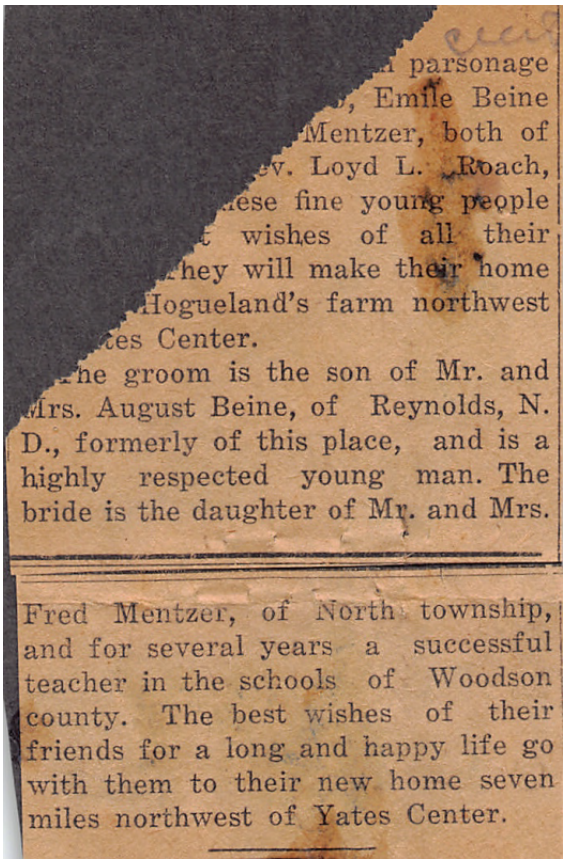
Thankfully, Ancestry supports this functionality. By changing a surname search to **"Exact and Soundex"**, I expanded my results significantly. For example, searching the 1850 New York census for "Nafus" using Exact and Soundex returned **219 results**, compared to just **8** with an exact match.

If FamilySearch were to incorporate Soundex capabilities into its experimental full-text search tool, it could unlock even more possibilities for researchers. Here's hoping they bring this time-tested tool into the digital age.

Friday Find

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 25, 2025
Mentzer
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/25/friday-find-82/

Among the many newspaper clippings saved by my grandmother, Pauline Mentzer Briles, was one announcing the marriage of her cousin, Cecil M. Mentzer, to Emile Beine. Unfortunately, only part of the clipping has survived.



parsonage
, Emile Beine
Mentzer, both of
v. Loyd L. Roach,
ese fine young people
wishes of all their
hey will make their home
Hogueland's farm northwest
es Center.
he groom is the son of Mr. and
Mrs. August Beine, of Reynolds, N.
D., formerly of this place, and is a
highly respected young man. The
bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs.

Fred Mentzer, of North township,
and for several years a successful
teacher in the schools of Woodson
county. The best wishes of their
friends for a long and happy life go
with them to their new home seven
miles northwest of Yates Center.

However, I recently found this same article while searching digitized newspapers and was pleasantly surprised to find not just one version—but three separate newspaper accounts of their wedding!

From the Yates Center News

Beine—Mentzer

At the Christian church parsonage Sunday, April 8, 1923, Emile Beine and Miss Cecil M. Mentzer, both of Yates Center, Rev. Loyd L. Roach, officiating. These fine young people have the best wishes of all their friends. They will make their home on Mr. Hogueland's farm northwest of Yates Center.

> The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. August Beine, of Reynolds, N. D., formerly of this place, and is a highly respected young man. The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs.
>
> Fred Mentzer, of North township, and for several years a successful teacher in the schools of Woodson county. The best wishes of their friends for a long and happy life go with them to their new home seven miles northwest of Yates Center.

From the Woodson County Advocate

> **BEINE — MENTZER**
>
> Emil F. Beine and Cecile M. Mentzer, both of Yates Center, were married at the Christian parsonage Sunday, April 8, 1923, Rev. Lloyd L. Roach, pastor, officiating. These excellent young people are well known and have a host of friends in this vicinity where they have spent most of their lives.
>
> The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. August Beine, of Reynolds, N. Dakota, formerly of this place, and is a highly respected young man.
>
> The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Mentzer, of North township, and for several years has been a successful teacher in the schools of Woodson county.
>
> The best wishes of their friends, for a long and happy life, go with them to their new home, seven miles northwest of Yates Center.

From the Woodson County Journal

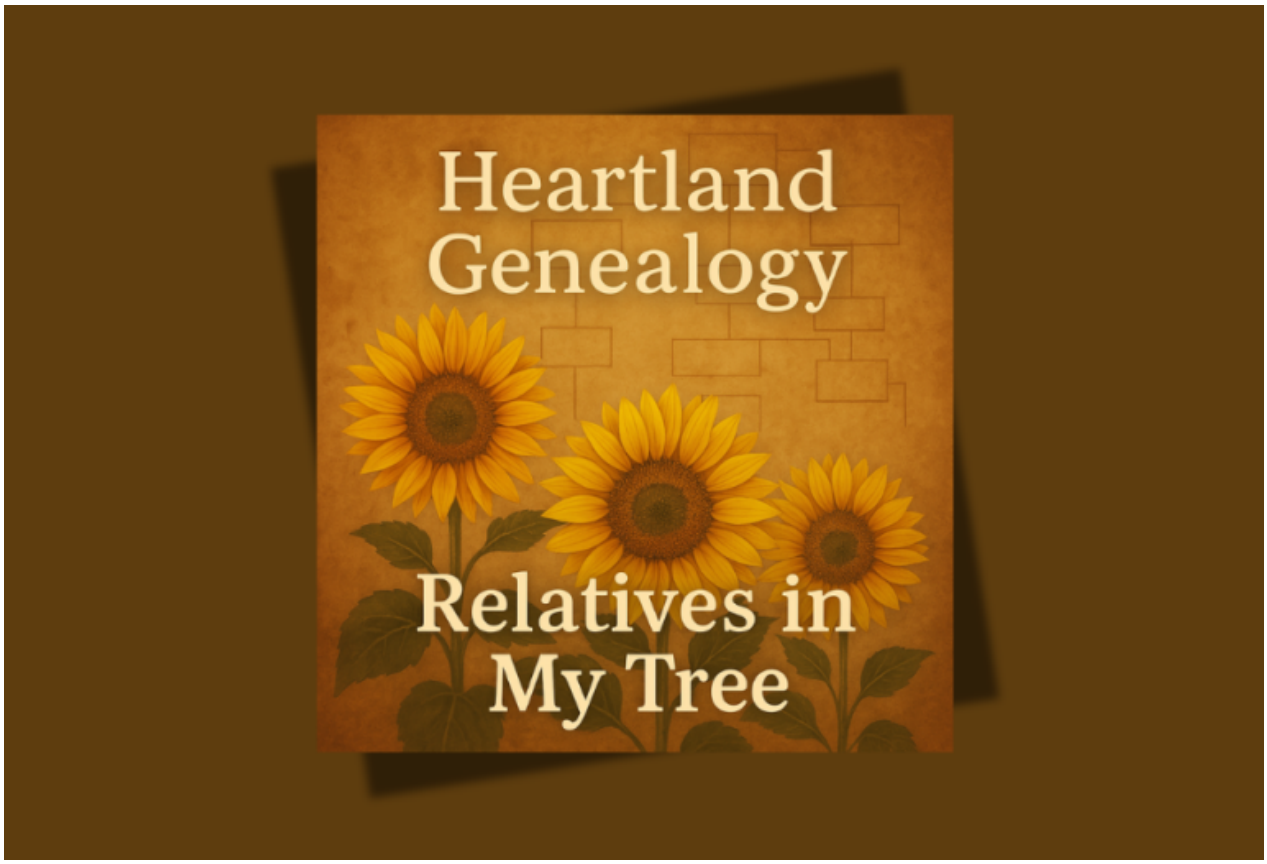
> Emil F. Beine and Miss Cecil M. Mentzer, both of Yates Center, were married by Rev. L. L. Roach at the Christian church parsonage in Yates Center Sunday, April 8, 1923. The many friends offer congratulations.

This discovery allowed me to confirm details about the ceremony and learn even more about the young couple's life after marriage. It's always rewarding to see how these saved mementos from the past align with digitized historical records, especially when they shed light on family members like Cecil.

You can view Cecil M. Mentzer's FamilySearch profile here: 9KD2-M7R

Relatives in My Tree

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 26, 2025
Crawford
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/26/relatives-in-my-tree-2/



Marion Richmond Crawford, my great-uncle

Marion Richmond Crawford was born on October 24, 1895, in Dodge City, Kansas, the son of Judson Foster Crawford and Josie Winifred Hammond. [1–6]

He spent his early years in Dodge City, appearing in the census there in 1900, 1905, 1910, and 1915. [7–10]

On April 20, 1917, Marion was recruited by the Dodge City recruiting office for service in the Coastal Artillery and was sent to Fort Logan, Colorado. [11] Just a few days later, on April 23, he formally enlisted in the U.S. Army at Dodge City and was assigned to Battery D of the 13th Field Artillery. [3,12]

In June 1917, the Methodist Sunday School in Dodge City honored him for his military service. [13] By January 1918, he was stationed with Battery D, 14th Field Artillery, at Fort Bliss, Texas. [14] Later that year, he was stationed at Camp Green in Charlotte, North Carolina. [3]

Marion served overseas in France during World War I and participated in the Battle of the Argonne Forest in August 1918 as a member of the 13th Field Artillery. [3,15] After the war, he departed from Brest, France, aboard the U.S.S. *Zeelandia* on July 18, 1919. [16] He arrived back in the United States on July 31, 1919, and was officially discharged from military

service on August 6, 1919, in Iowa. [12,17–19] He returned home to Dodge City on August 14. [20]

In 1920, Marion was living at 504 Avenue G in Dodge City and working as a switchman for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway. [21–23] He was a member of both the Ancient Order of United Workmen and the Brotherhood of Switchmen. [3]

Tragically, Marion died on July 29, 1920, at the age of 24 when he fell beneath the wheels of a moving switch engine in Dodge City. [1,5–6,24–29] He was laid to rest at Maple Grove Cemetery in Dodge City. [4,26,30]

ENDNOTES:

1. Crawford, Judson F., Judson F. Crawford Family Bible (n.p.: no publisher, n.d.); Marcia Philbrick, Seneca, KS, photocopy in Crawford.Washington.Notebook

2. “Injury Fatal to M. R. Crawford”, Dodge City Journal, (Dodge City Kansas), 29 July 1920, p. 1 col. 1; Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

3. “Injury Fatal to M. R. Crawford,” The Dodge City Kansas Journal (Dodge City, Kansas), 29 July 1920, page 1; digital image, Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 8 August 2021).

4. Tombstone, Maple Grove Cemetery, Dodge City Kansas read by Marcia Philbrick, 1996, Marion R. Crawford tombstone (Crawford.KS.153)

5. Marion Richmond Crawford, death certificate (Standard Certificate of Death) 229 220 (29 July 1920), Kansas State Board of Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Topeka, Kansas.

6. “U.S., Veterans Administration Master Index, 1917-1940,” Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online (22 August 2021), Marion R Crawford.

7. 1900 U.S. Census, Ford County, Kansas, population schedule, Dodge City, Ford County, Kansas, ED 49, Sheet 18A, Image 35 of 42, household 383, Crawford J F; digital image, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online November 2017); NARA T623

8. 1905 Kansas State Census, Ford County, Kansas, Kansas State Census, Dodge City, Ford County, Kansas, page 42, Image 83 of 178, household 291, J F Crawford; digital image, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online November 2017); Kansas State Historical Society

9. 1910 U.S. Census, Ford County, Kansas, population schedule, Dodge City, Ford County, Kanass, ED 45, Sheet 3B, Image 6 of 30, household 16, Crawford JF; digital image, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online November 2017); NARA microfilm publication T624

10. 1915 Kansas State Census, Ford County, Kansas, population schedule, Dodge City, Ford County, Kansas, page 2, Image 73 of 279, household 9, Crawford J F; digital image, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online November 2017); Kansas State Historical Society

11. “Two Recruits a Day,” The Dodge City Daily Globe (Dodge City, Kansas), 20 April 1917, page 1; digital images, Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 15 August 2021).

12. Extract from Discharge Certificate of Enlisted Man to Secure Vitory Medal, Marion R. Crawford; Crawford Family Papers; privately held by Marcia Philbrick, Seneca, Kansas, 2016. passed down to Marcia Philbrick by Winnie Crawford.

13. “Methodists Honor Soldiers,” The Dodge City Daily Globe (Dodge City, Kansas), 9 June 1917, page 1; digital images, Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 15 August 2021).

14. “Where Soldiers of Ford County Are,” The Dodge City Daily Globe (Dodge City, Kansas), 28 January 1918, page 1; digital images, Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 15 August 2021).

15. “Had Been at Front 14 Days,” The Dodge City Daily Globe (Dodge City, Kansas), 16 September 1918, page 1; digital

images, Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 16 August 2021).

16. Lists of Incoming Passengers, 1917-1938; Lists of OUtgoing Passengers, 1917-1938, database with images, Fold3 http://www.fold3.com :).

17. Extract from Discharge Certificate of Enlisted Man to Secure Vitory Medal, Marion R. Crawford; Crawford Family Papers; privately held by Marcia Philbrick, Seneca, Kansas, 2016. passed down to Marcia Philbrick by Winnie Crawford.

18. Enlistment Record for Marion R. Crawford, Crawford Family Papers; privately held by Marcia Philbrick, Seneca, Kansas, 2016. passed down to Marcia Philbrick by Winnie Crawford.

19. Honorable Discharge from the United States Army, Marion R. Crawford; Crawford Family Papers; privately held by Marcia Philbrick, Seneca, Kansas, 2016. passed down to Marcia Philbrick by Winnie Crawford.

20. “Three More Boys Arrive,” The Dodge City Daily Globe (Dodge City, Kansas), 14 August 1919, page 1; digital images, Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 16 August 2021).

21. 1920 U.S. Census, Ford County, Kansas, population schedule, Dodge City, Ford County, Kansas, ED 53, Sheet 7B, Image 14 of 22, dwelling 161, Crawford Judson F; digital image, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online November 2017); NARA microfilm publication T625

22. Etrick’s Directory of Ford County 1920 (Dodge City, Kansas: Etrick Printery, 1920), page 26, Crawford; digital image, Ancestry Heritage Quest (interactive.ancestryheritagequest.com : viewedonline September 2016).

23. Etrick’s Directory of Ford County 1920 (Dodge City, Kansas: Etric Printery, 1920), page 49, Crawford J F; digital image, Ancestry.com, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : viewed online 18 August 2021).

24. Tombstone, Maple Grove Cemetery, Dodge City Kansas read by Marcia Philbrick, 1996, Marion R. Crawford tombstone (Crawford.KS.153).

25. Hulpieu Swaim Funeral Home Records [Dodge City, Kansas] (:), 1921-1926 (Crawford.KS.075)

26. Find a Grave, database and images, Find a Grave (www.findagrave.com : viewed online 8 August 2021), memorial for Marion Richmond Crawford (1895-1920), Find a Grave Memorial no. #110357859, created by Marcia Philbrick, citing Maple Grove Cemetery, Dodge City, Ford County, Kansas; accompanying photograph by Tim Tompkins, Marion Richmond Crawford.

27. “Injury Fatal to M. R. Crawford,” The Dodge City Kansas Journal (Dodge City, Kansas), 29 July 1920, page 1; digital image, Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 8 August 2021).

28. “Under Engine an Hour,” The Hutchinson News (Hutchinson, Kansas), 2 August 1920, page 15; Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 8 August 2021).

29. “Dodge City Switchman Killed Under Engine,” The Hutchinson Gazette (Hutchinson, Kansas), 31 July 1920, page 7; digital images, Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 8 August 2021).

30. Computer Printout for Maple Grove Cemetery (Dodge City, KS: Dodge City, Kansas, 5/29/1985), Record #: lot 1 block 95 section 3 (Crawford.KS.080)

The above narrative was written by ChatGPT using the information from a narrative report generated by RootsMagic. This is the first time, ChatGPT has kept the numbers for the endnotes.

Saturday Night Genealogy Fun – Time Traveler

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 27, 2025
Uncategorized
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/27/saturday-night-genealogy-fun-time-traveler/

Calling all Genea-Musings Fans:

It's Saturday Night again –

Time for some more Genealogy Fun!!

Come on, everybody, join in and accept the mission and execute it with precision.

1) We all wish that we knew more about our most elusive ancestors – the ones we might not know the surname for, or the one who was probably adopted, changed his name for some reason, or lived through war or a natural disaster.

2) Be a time traveler – where would you go, who would you speak with, what would you ask them? My journey into the past would take me back to 1799 Garrard County, Kentucky, with a brief stop in 1850 Warren County, Indiana, along the way.

During my stop in Indiana, I would visit Nelson Crawford's wife, Martha, to ask two important questions: Who were her parents, and was she related to her mother-in-law, Sarah Smith?

Then, traveling on to 1799 Kentucky, I would visit my fourth great-grandfather, James Crawford, and his new wife, Sarah Smith. During our conversation, I would ask the following questions:

- Where were you born, and who are your parents?
- Are your parents still living? If so, where are they residing?
- When did you arrive in Garrard County?
- Who did you travel with to reach Garrard County?
- Did you know each other before settling here?
- Do you have any siblings? If so, who are they, and where were they living when you married?
- How did the Revolutionary War impact your life?
- Do you have any other relatives living in Garrard County? If so, who are they, and how are you related?

For James specifically, I would have several additional questions:

- Did any of your relatives serve during the American Revolution? If so, who were they, and in what units did they serve?
- Are you related to the James Crawford who married Martha Knight? If so, how? If not, what led you to migrate to Ohio with them?
- Are you related to James and Rebecca Crawford, who owned land along Paint Lick Creek? If so, how?
- Are you connected to the Adams family of Garrard County? If so, how?
- Are you connected to the Dooley family of Garrard County and Preble County? If so, how?
- Did you purchase land along the Marrowbone? If so, when did you purchase it, and when did you sell it?
- What were you doing between 1790 and 1799?

Out of curiosity, I asked ChatGPT

> THis week's saturday night genealogy fun prompt is to Be a time traveler – where would you go, who would you speak with, what would you ask them? I plan to time travel back to 1799 Garrard county Kentucky to visit with my 4th great grandfather James Crawford. What questions would you suggest I ask?

ChatGPT suggested some of the same questions but also made siggestions, I didn't think of. Below is the response.

That sounds like such a fun and meaningful trip — especially visiting 1799 Garrard County, Kentucky! Here's a list of **suggested questions** you might ask your 4th great-grandfather, **James Crawford**, to make the most of your time-travel visit:

Family and Origins

- **Where were you born, and who were your parents?**
- **Did you have siblings?** If so, what were their names and where did they go?
- **Can you tell me about your wife — her name, parents, and where she was born?**
- **Have you kept any family records, a Bible, or documents about your family's history?**
- **Do you know anything about our family's origins before coming to Kentucky? (Scotland, Ireland, Virginia?)**

Migration and Settlement

- **What brought you to Garrard County, Kentucky?**
- **Where did you live before moving here?**
- **Did you travel with other family members or neighbors when you came here?**
- **What was the journey like?**

Daily Life and Community

- **What is your occupation here?**
- **What is life like in Garrard County at this time?**
- **Who are your closest friends, neighbors, and associates?**
- **Are there particular churches you attend or help organize?** (This could hint at religion — Presbyterian? Baptist?)

Land and Property

- **How did you acquire your land here?**
- **Can you describe your property and home?**
- **Did you purchase the land, or was it granted to you?**

Military Service

- **Did you or your relatives serve in the Revolutionary War or any other conflicts?**
- **Do you have stories or experiences from your service (if any)?**

Important Events and Connections

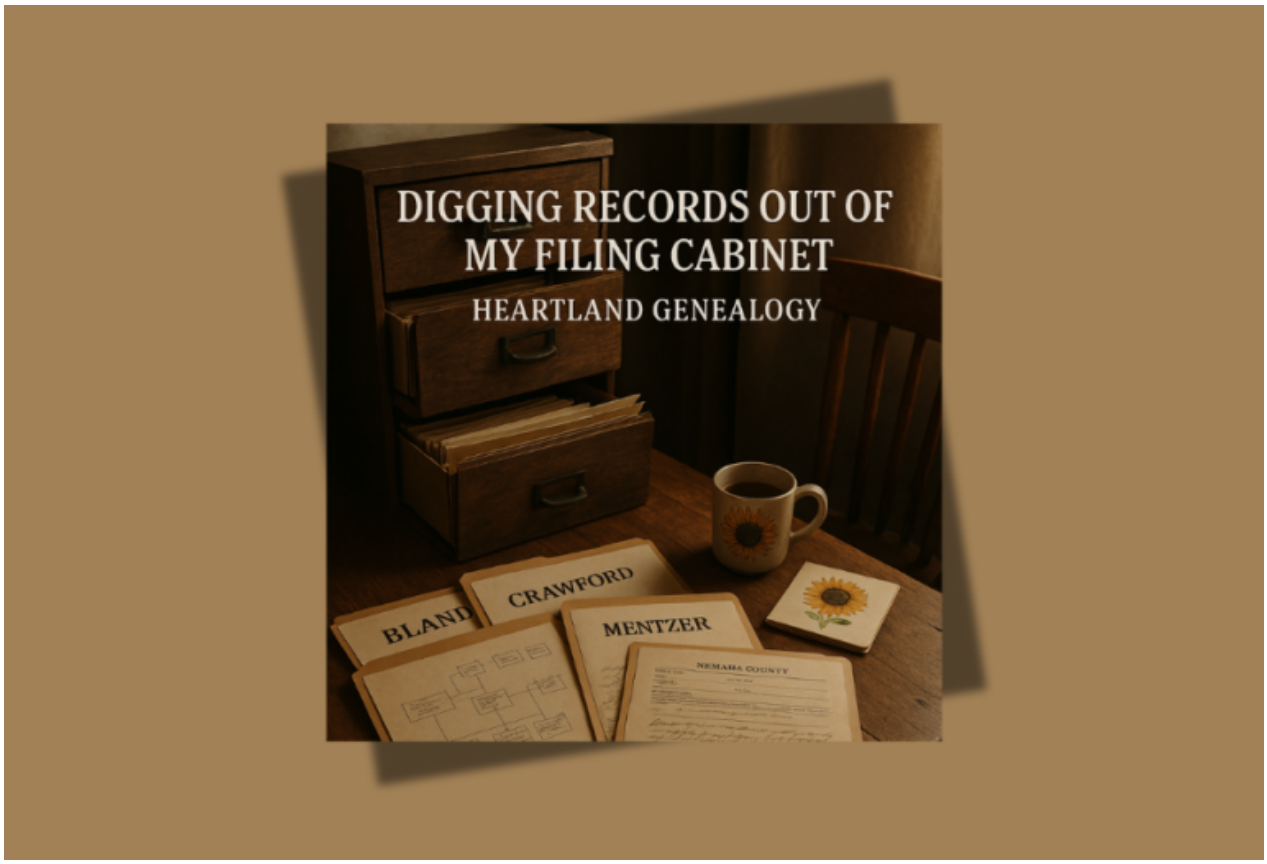
- **Have you been involved in any important county or community events?**
- **Are there any family stories I should know that have been passed down?**

Hopes and Legacy

- **What are your hopes for your children and descendants?**
- **Is there advice you would want to pass on to your family in the future?**

Monday's Diggins

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 28, 2025
Briles
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/28/mondays-diggins/



Do you have photocopies of obituaries tucked away in your research files? Today's find from my filing cabinet is the obituary of my aunt, Barb. While I could have used the old photocopy and ChatGPT to transcribe it, I opted to locate a cleaner version on Newspapers.com for better accuracy. Using that image, I created the transcription below and also took the opportunity to update the RootsMagic citation for this obituary.

Obituaries

Barbara Ann Thompson

Barbara Ann Thompson, 47, of 1929 Blue Hills Rd., died Monday at the Saint Mary Hospital.

She was born Aug. 22, 1934, in Emporia and was a resident of Manhattan for 25 years. She was a homemaker and assistant vice president of Capitol Federal Savings and Loan.

Mrs. Thompson was a member of First United Methodist Church, and the American Business Women's Association.

She married Marvin Thompson on Oct. 16, 1954, in Kansas City, Kan. He survives.

Other survivors include two sons, Marc Thompson, Phoenix, Ariz., and Keith Thompson, Jacksonville, Ark.; a daughter, Connie Chapman, 2206 Prairie Glen; a brother, Walter Briles, Covington, La.; two sisters, Letha Doolittle, San Bernardino, Calif., and Roberta Crawford, Emporia; and three grandchildren.

Funeral services will be 10 a.m. Thursday at Cowan-Edwards-Yorgensen Funeral Chapel with the Rev. Charles Bennett officiating. Burial will be in Sunrise Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society in care of the funeral home.

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"Obituaries: Barbara Ann Thompson," The Manhattan Mercury (Manhattan, Kansas), 4 May 1982, page 2; digital images, Newspapers.com (www.newspapers.com : viewed online 19 April 2025).

Merging Citations

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 29, 2025
RootsMagic10
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/29/merging-citations/

Cleaning Up Duplicate Citations in RootsMagic

Do you have an overwhelming number of citations in your genealogy software? According to RootsMagic 10, my file contains **6,475 sources** and over **30,000 citations**. However, many of those citations aren't unique—they're duplicates created when I sourced the same record multiple times for different individuals.

While preparing a narrative report, I discovered just how common this duplication is—particularly for census records. Instead of reusing an existing citation for each family member, I had unknowingly created a new citation every time. Fortunately, **RootsMagic makes it easy to clean up this kind of duplication** with its built-in **Merge Citations** tool.

Here's how you can merge duplicate citations in RootsMagic:

1. Open the list of citations for the relevant source.
2. Highlight the citation you want to **keep**.
3. Click the **three vertical dots** (menu icon).
4. Select **Merge Citations**.
5. Choose the duplicate citation(s) to merge.
6. Click **OK** at the bottom of the window.
7. Review both versions to confirm they are identical, then click **MERGE DUPLICATES**.
8. Repeat the process for any additional duplicates.

Using this feature, I reduced the number of citations in a single narrative report from **125 to 110**—a small change that makes a big difference in clarity and consistency.

This helpful feature was introduced in **RootsMagic 8** and continues to be available in version 10. If you'd like a walkthrough, check out the following video that demonstrates how to merge citations effectively.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=q_cGnuMCF1A

For more detailed guidance on merging sources and citations, consult the RootsMagic 10 online manual.

Quick and Dirty – Not Quite

By Marcia Crawford Philbrick
April 30, 2025
Ancestry,DNA,FamilySearch,RootsMagic
https://heartlandgenealogy.org/2025/04/30/quick-and-dirty-not-quite/

Why I Don't Use Quick and Dirty Trees

Have you ever tried using a "quick and dirty tree" to identify a DNA match? After watching *Genealogy TV's* podcast, *Quick and Dirty Tree Strategies*, I realized I take a different—and more deliberate—approach. So, I thought I'd share why I *don't* follow the quick and dirty method, and what I do instead.

Why I Avoid Quick and Dirty Trees

There are a few key reasons I steer clear of this strategy:

- **Sheer volume of matches**: I have over 130,000 DNA matches. For the vast majority, I don't yet know the connection.
- **Well-developed tree**: I've already traced my lineage through all of my 2nd and 3rd great-grandparents, and nearly all of my 4th great-grandparents.
- **Known close matches**: I've identified my 1st and 2nd cousins and most of my 3rd cousins, providing a solid foundation for comparison.

Because of this, I don't need to build speculative trees for my DNA matches. Instead, I use my well-researched tree to identify their possible place *within* it.

My Alternative Approach

Rather than starting with the match and building backward, I start with my known ancestors and work forward—adding their descendants. The goal is to give Ancestry's algorithms more data to work with so *they* can find the connection through ThruLines and other tools.

Here's how I do it:

1. **Use RootsMagic's FamilySearch connection**
   I add spouses and children of individuals in my tree using the FamilySearch interface within RootsMagic.
2. **Apply color coding for lineage tracking**
   I use color coding to assign each person to their appropriate ancestral line, keeping everything visually organized.
3. **Refresh the group in RootsMagic**
   This allows the new individuals to be added to my existing ancestral line group.
4. **Update my Ancestry tree with TreeShare**
   Once I've verified and documented the new people, I sync them to my Ancestry tree using RootsMagic's TreeShare feature.
5. **Use Ancestry hints to locate records**
   I follow Ancestry's hints to find census, marriage, birth, and death records, then cite those sources in both RootsMagic and my Ancestry tree.
6. **Repeat the process**
   As I identify new generations of descendants, I continue the cycle—always sourcing but never rushing.

Not Quick—But Worth It

While I do cite sources, I don't dive into exhaustive research for each person. Still, I take enough care to ensure accuracy, which slows down the process. But for me, that's okay. I'd rather have a tree rooted in solid information than one filled with shaky assumptions.

Final Thoughts

Quick and dirty trees may work for some, but I prefer a method that builds on the solid foundation of my existing research. By thoughtfully expanding my known lines and providing Ancestry with more complete data, I increase the chances of uncovering meaningful DNA connections—without sacrificing accuracy. It's not fast, but it's effective.

What's Your Approach

Genealogy is full of different paths to discovery. What strategies have worked best for you when trying to connect DNA matches?